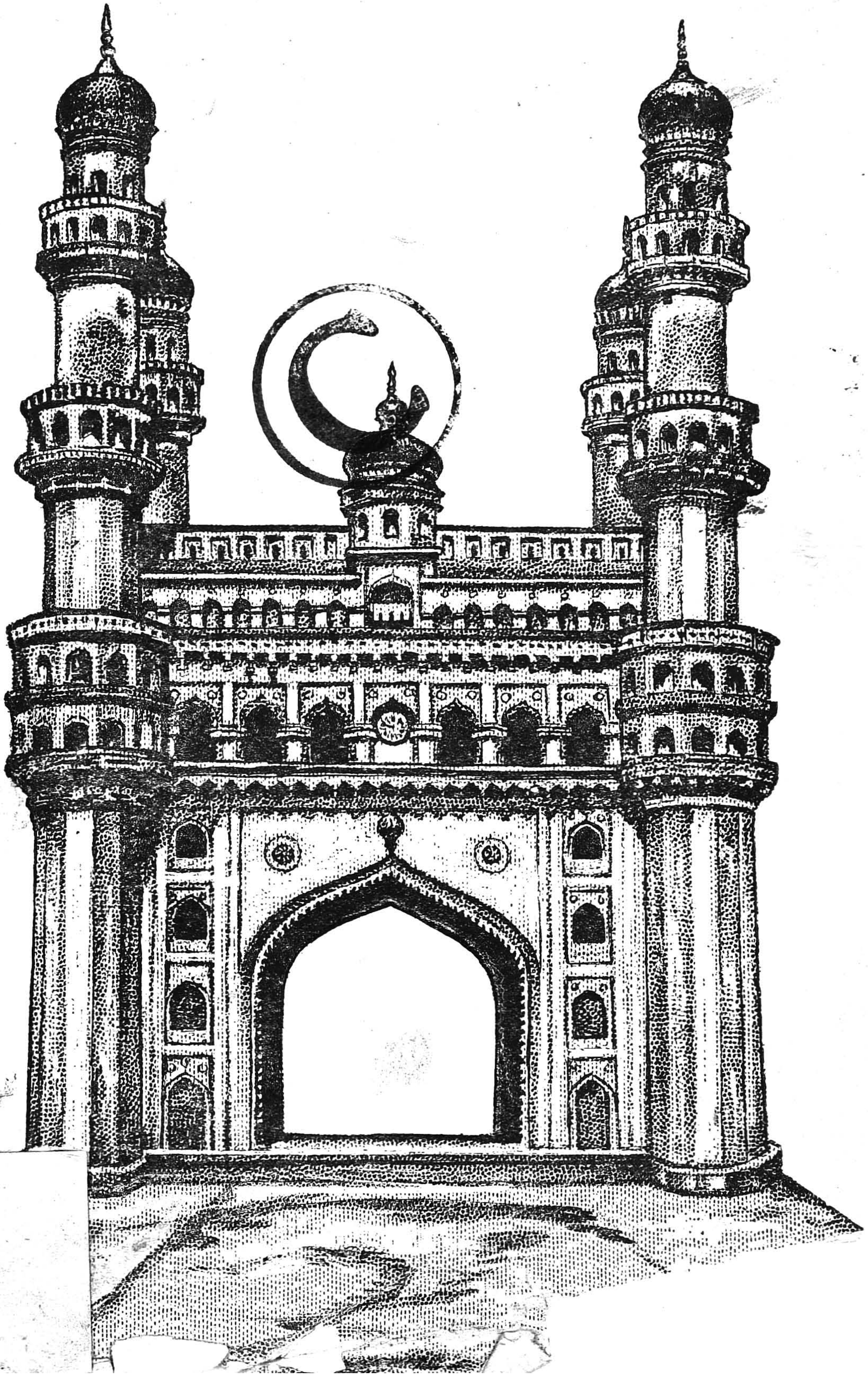
HYDERABAD



NA216
N51
6472

Issued for
The Ministry of Transport
by
The Publications Division
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India

APRIL 1951

HYDERABAD

A GUIDE TO ART AND ARCHITECTURE

★

THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES LIBRARY
ACC. No.
6472
EGMORE, MADRAS-600 008

ENGRAVED AND PRINTED BY S. N. GUHA RAY AT SREE SARASWATY PRESS LTD., 32, UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA 9.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	Historical Background	1
II	Early Hindu Monuments	7
III	Rock-hewn Architecture	15
IV	Muslim Monuments	35
V	The Deccan Forts	52
VI	Recent Architecture in the State	64
VII	Glossary	66

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

A gateway, Warangal Fort.
The thousand pillared temple, Hanumakonda, Hyderabad.
Jagannatha temple, Aundha.
A design on the ceiling, Ajanta.
Flying Gandharvas and Apsaras, Ajanta. Cave XVII.
Pulakesin II receiving a Persian envoy, a fresco from Ajanta.
A female figure, Ajanta. Cave I.
Façade, Ajanta. Cave XIX.
The Chaitya, Ajanta. Cave IX.
Kailasa Temple, Ellora.
Viswakarma Cave, Ellora. Cave X.
Rameswara Cave, Ellora. Cave XXI.
Tin Thal, Ellora. Cave XII.
Sita-ki-Nahani (Bath), Ellora. Cave XXIX.
Indra Sabha, Ellora. Cave XXIII.
Bibi-ka-Maqbara, (intended to rival the Taj Mahal),
built in memory of his wife by Aurangzeb, Aurangabad.
Mecca Masjid, Hyderabad.
Murshidabad Mosque, Hyderabad.
Tomb of Sultan Muhammad Kuli Kutb Shah, Golconda.
The Fortress, Daulatabad.
The Fortress, Bidar.
Ruins of the Fort, Golconda.
The Courtyard, Gulbarga Fort.
The Museum, Hyderabad.
Osmania General Hospital, Hyderabad.
Arts College, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

CORRECTION

On page 28, please read the first line of the last paragraph as follows:

Ellora is about seven miles from Deogiri (now Daulatabad), the old capital of

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

THE State of Hyderabad is situated on the eastern side of the great Deccan Plateau. The word Deccan is a shortened form of the Sanskrit Dakshinapatha, meaning the southern tract—that is, the country lying south of the Vindhya Ranges. But the term is generally used to include the whole of the peninsular India.

The area of the State of Hyderabad is about the size of the United Kingdom, or nearly as large as France. The population is mainly Hindu and includes Marathas, Kanarese and Telugus.

The capital—Hyderabad—is situated on the banks of the river Musi. It is one of the largest cities in India. The Char Minar, built in 1591 by the founder of the State, is one of the most attractive landmarks of the city.

The Deccan is fortunate in the possession of a superb variety of building materials. The rocks of the Archaean complex, for example, yield materials admirably suited for massive constructions, such as monolithic pillars.

Geologically the Deccan is a relatively stable block much older than the northern mountains and plains. Nearly fifty per cent of the State of Hyderabad is composed of hard basaltic rock of the Upper Cretaceous Deccan Trap. Black and grey lime-stone and the banded varieties of basaltic stone are materials which offer rich decorative possibilities. Indian builders' craftsmen have made full use of them. It should be noted here that the Ellora and Ajanta caves were excavated in the hard basaltic trap rock. The east and north-east of the State comprise an area covered by the sedimentaries of the Gondwana and other geological formations. The surface geology of the State is, broadly speaking, black cotton soil over the Deccan Trap, and loamy gneissoid soil over the Archaean rocks.

So much for the physical setting of the architectural art that flourished in the Deccan. A few additional geographical factors which exercised considerable influence on the architecture of the Deccan may be noted here. It is not always possible to use stone, partly owing to the fact that the available rock is not invariably of the same quality, and also on account of transport difficulties. In some parts of the State there is a long and sustained tradition in brick construction and the conservative artisan prefers to use the material to which he is accustomed. We therefore find that some of the finest buildings are in brickwork.

II

The history of the Deccan is rich in its varied associations. It is of great antiquity. Epic literature seems to indicate the existence of a kingdom in the south

extending from Vidarbha (corresponding to modern Berar) to the island of Lanka (Ceylon), and this kingdom is reputed to have long been in an advanced state of civilization. Recently a large number of megalithic relics with inscriptions have been discovered, and these characters may perhaps throw some light on the origin of the Brahmi script. Coomaraswamy in his *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* states that "writing, no doubt of an early Brahmi character, must have been known in the eighth century B.C. or earlier." With reference to the discovery of megalithic remains of the Deccan, Dr. Yazdani writes: "Cunningham supposed that Brahmi was derived from indigenous Indian hieroglyphics, which hypothesis does not seem to be unreasonable in the light of our discovery of these marks (on vessels and cairns)."*

Most probably a large part of the Deccan was under the Maurya Empire even before the reign of Emperor Asoka. His edicts are to be found at Maski in the Raichur district and also at Gavimath and Palkigundu in the Koppal districts of the State. After the death of Asoka, his empire was broken into two parts: the eastern section which embraced the area now within the State of Hyderabad passed to Dasaratha ; and the southern region, most of which was soon lost to the Magadha rulers owing to the rise of the Andhras.

The Andhras regained their independent status under Simuka (B.C. 246-230), the founder of the Satavahana dynasty. During the reign of this dynasty, Nasik was annexed and the dominion of the Andhras extended over the whole of the Deccan. Pulumayi IV was, however, the last king of the line and under his rule the Andhras lost their power and prestige in the Deccan.

For more than four centuries the rulers of the Andhra dynasty had played a leading part in the history of the Deccan. Under their liberal patronage many rock-cut sanctuaries, stupas and structural chaityas were excavated by Buddhist craftsmen.

From the middle of the sixth century A.D. to almost the end of the twelfth century, over a period of over 600 years, the Chalukya and the Rashtrakuta dynasties dominated the political and social scene in the Deccan.

During their long and powerful sway in the Deccan, Chalukya rulers allowed diverse religious sects—Buddhism, Jainism, Saivaism—to influence art and architecture. As a consequence of this liberal patronage, the Deccan became a centre of great architectural development. The technique of building rock-cut temples was borrowed by Brahmin artisans from the Buddhist and Jain rivals. Some of these sixth century Brahmanical caves contain striking sculptures in good preservation.

The Rashtrakutas overthrew the Chalukyas, took over the succession of the former Chalukya dominions and ruled over them for more than two hundred years. The rival powers in the Deccan during this period were the Rashtrakutas, the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi and the Cholas who had then taken the place of the

* G. Yazdani: "Megalithic Remains of the Deccan—a New Feature of Them." Jour. Hyderabad Archaeological Society, 1917.

Pallavas at Kanchi. But these dynastic changes did not fundamentally affect cultural development. The period was, however, marked by a decline of Buddhistic influence, which gave place to Jainism and orthodox Brahminism. The remarkable Kailasa temple at Ellora, hewn from solid rock during the reign of Krishna I, bears testimony to the generous patronage of art by the Rashtrakuta king.

In A.D. 973 the Chalukya family of Kalyani under Taila II managed to regain the throne from the last of the Rashtrakuta kings. Thus the restored Chalukya dynasty ruled for about two more centuries and made its capital at Kalyani. The temples of Aihole and Pattadakal belong to this period.

The Chalukyan style of architecture was naturally evolved from the Dravidian, but it acquired subsequently a distinctive character of its own. At Ittagi in the Raichur district there is a great Saiva temple surrounded by the ruins of several smaller shrines. These were probably built during the reign of the Kalyani Chalukyas. The great Saiva temple is regarded by archaeologists "as one of the most highly and architecturally perfect of the Chalukyan shrines."

The eclipse of the Chalukyan dynasty began in about A.D. 1100 when the Yadavas of Devagiri in the west and the Hoysalas of Dorasamudra in the south exerted pressure to dethrone the last ruler of the dynasty. The Yadava kings were the first to build the famous fortress of Devagiri, adjacent to the city of the same name.

During the reigns of the Hoysala kings a distinct type of architecture was developed, the most notable example of which is the temple at Dorasamudra in the State of Mysore. The Chalukyan style reached its climax under the Hoysalas.

III

Meanwhile events of unparalleled importance were taking place in the north. But the Deccan powers were not much concerned with what was happening in northern India. Even the decisive defeat of the Hindu confederacy in the second battle of Tarain (A.D. 1192) by Sultan Muhammad Ghori and the subsequent establishment of the Sultanate of Delhi under the so-called Slave dynasty did not seriously disturb the Yadavas or the Hoysalas or any of the southern states.

Ala-ud-din Khalji, the nephew and son-in-law of the Sultan of Delhi, Jalal-ud-din Khalji (Firoz Shah), was the governor of the Bengal provinces. He had heard accounts of the prosperity of the Deccan, and marched southwards with a large army in 1294. Within thirty years both the Yadavas and the Hoysalas were all but annihilated.

By 1340 a large part of the Deccan was included under the rule of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlak of Delhi. The transfer of his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad, however, failed to bring law and order, and eventually the country between the Narbada and the Kistna broke away from the Delhi Sultanate and remained independent of them for about two and a half centuries.

The Bahmani dynasty which now replaced the Delhi Sultanate ruled the Deccan

for nearly two centuries, from 1347 to 1526, and some of the most splendid architectural monuments of the State were built by them. The first Sultan transferred his capital to Kulbarga or Gulbarga, which he renamed Hasanabad. The beautiful Jama Masjid built in 1347 A.D. within the fort of Gulbarga is unique of its kind in India.

The Bahmani sultans were generous patrons of art and learning, and the fame of the court of Gulbarga spread to all parts of the Muslim world. Many foreign scholars, artists and poets visited the Deccan during the reign of Sultan Muhammad II (1377-1397). The great Persian poet Hafiz intended to visit Gulbarga and even embarked for the purpose at a port in the Persian Gulf. Unfortunately his ship was caught in a heavy storm and the poet suffered much from seasickness. So he had to return to land and when he arrived again in Persia, he sent Sultan Muhammad a poem which may be rendered as follows:

"For the wealth of the world I will not exchange
The breeze of my garden which softly blows ;
My friends may scoff at me, but I will not rage:
I will stop here at home with the Bulbul and rose.
Enticing, no doubt, is your splendid crown,
With costliest gems in a fair golden bed ;
But through perils and risks that ominous frown,
I might win it, perhaps, but then have no head.
When I thought of your pearls, it seemed then to me
To risk a short voyage would not be too bold ;
But now I am sure, that one wave of the sea
Can *not* be repaid by vast treasures of gold.
What care I for pearls or for gems rich and rare
When friendship and love in my home both are mine?
All the gilding of art can never compare
With the pleasure derived from generous wine!
Let Hafiz retire from the cares of the world ;
Contented with only a handful of gold ;
In the lap of repose here let him lie safely curled,
Far removed from the sea and its dangers untold."

The Bahmani Kingdom reached the zenith of its power under Sultan Firoz Shah. He was a great builder and a versatile scholar. Many attractive edifices were built in his capital Gulbarga during his reign. Unfortunately from the middle of the fifteenth century, the Bahmani sultans became involved in wars with the neighbouring countries. Province after province struggled to gain independence from the central government and at the close of the century there existed five independent ruling dynasties in the Deccan.

Each of these dynasties left numerous architectural monuments in the Deccan. The Adil Shahis were great patrons of art and during their energetic and enlightened rule, their capital, as Fergusson says, "was adorned with a series of buildings as remarkable as those of any of the Muhammadan capitals of India." The edifices built during this romantic but restless period of the history of the Deccan have a

peculiar grace and elegance of their own. They differ from the styles of northern India and are marked by a tendency to combine both Persian and indigenous ideas in construction.

IV

In 1526, Babur, King of Kabul, overthrew the Delhi Sultanate at Panipat and laid the foundation of the Mughal Empire. At the close of the sixteenth century the Mughals secured a footing in the Deccan. Soon after his succession to the throne, Prince Khurram, now Emperor Shahjahan, made necessary preparations foi continuing the Deccan campaign. As a result of his ruthless policy he succeeded in subjugating Ahmadnagar and compelling Golconda and Bijapur to recognize the suzerainty of the Mughal Empire. The young Prince Aurangzeb was appointed viceroy over the provinces of the Deccan. He was then a youth of seventeen, and his rule was only of a nominal character. Kirki, the place where he resided, is now known as Aurangabad.

Aurangzeb ascended the throne in 1659. He was determined to secure the complete subjugation of the Sultanates in the Deccan and left Delhi to conduct the campaign in person. He pressed his assault on Bijapur and subsequently on Golconda.

But he soon came to realize that his ambition in respect of the Deccan was not fulfilled with the conquest of Bijapur and Golconda. The Maratha power had become too strong there and it had to be reduced to submission. The siege of the Maratha strongholds occupied him for over five years, and thereafter, Aurangzeb retired, and died in 1707.

In 1712 Muhammad Farrukh-Siyar proclaimed himself emperor but none of the nobles supported the young prince in his claim to the throne. He was saved and raised to power, however, by the Sayyid brothers, known in Indian history as the King-makers. Their success in supporting the young prince was, however, due to the alliance of the Turani party led by Chin Qilich Khan Bahadur, son of Ghaziuddin Firuz Jang of Aurangzeb's time.

Chin Qilich was the ablest man in the empire and received the title Nizam-ul-Mulk (Regulator of the Realm). He was given the viceroyalty of the six provinces of the Deccan with his headquarters at Aurangabad and deputies in each of the component provinces.

In 1714, Farrukh-Siyar was persuaded to send one of the Sayyid brothers, Husain Ali, to the Deccan, and Nizam-ul-Mulk was ousted from the viceroyalty. While serving as viceroy of the province of Malwa, he was biding his time for re-establishing himself in the Deccan. The opportunity came at the death of Farrukh-Siyar and on the accession of Muhammad Shah to the throne. From 1720 to 1722 Nizam-ul-Mulk held once again the viceroyalty of the Deccan. He was again called back to Delhi, but early in 1724, he decided to return to the Deccan where he retained his position by means of nominees. On reaching his capital at Aurangabad,

he discovered that the emperor had instructed Mubariz Khan, his deputy, to attack him. The emperor's intrigues were no match for the courageous and cool tactics of Nizam-ul-Mulk. In the battle of Shakarkhelda he gave a decisive blow to Mubariz Khan and his army. This victory marks the establishment in the Deccan of Nizam-ul-Mulk's hereditary rule. He reached Hyderabad on January 16, 1725, and made that city his capital. The emperor had to recognize the *fait accompli* and made a gesture of conciliation by confirming him in the viceroyalty of the Deccan with the title of Asaf Jah. This event marked the foundation of the present State of Hyderabad. After an unbroken reign lasting a quarter of a century, Asaf Jah died in 1748. During his rule, he came to an agreement with the Marathas recognizing them as the real landowners of the Deccan. His policy was to cultivate their friendship. Besides leaving an example of wise and tolerant administration, Asaf Jah's rule was distinguished by the construction of some interesting buildings.

CHAPTER TWO

EARLY HINDU MONUMENTS

IT is said that architecture is "the matrix of civilization." Rock-hewn monasteries, temples, mosques, shrines, tombs, palaces, forts—all these bear the stamp of the religious, social, political and economic forces of every phase of the romantic history of the Deccan. The monuments of the Deccan are therefore of special interest to the student of Indian architecture.

The archaeological heritage of the State includes palaeolithic, neolithic, and other prehistoric remains. Among the most varied remains discovered in the southern and eastern districts, there are interesting monuments of circular cairns and monolithic tombs. The prehistoric burial sites, mounds, rock-carvings and inscriptions yield a wealth of evidence regarding the early civilization of the Deccan.

The Deccan contained, as we have seen, rich and flourishing kingdoms for many centuries prior to the Muhammadan invasions. By reason of her geographical position, it was in the Deccan that many of the ancient dynasties built their forts. Although they are in a dilapidated condition, enough is left of their structures to give us some idea of military architecture. Then there are numerous temples which contain sculptures and decorative carvings. It is mainly in these temples and monasteries that we find the early Hindu architectural art best exhibited. Already in the archaeological museum at Hyderabad there is an immense collection of cornices, pillars, exquisitely carved stone panels, carved stone borders, nandis (bulls), elephants, various patterns of frieze and of floral decorations. We must not forget to mention inscriptions, coins and copperplate sanads which provide important clues to the history of the dynasties, both Hindu and Muslim, which ruled the kingdoms in the Deccan.

A quarter of a century ago, an Asokan rock edict was discovered by the Director of Archaeology in a site named Maski. The Department carried out an extensive survey of the hill on which the edict was found and excavations produced not only traces of an old town but several interesting articles, such as furnaces for smelting gold and silver, beads of different shapes, terra-cotta figurines, etc. It was at Maski that Hyderabad archaeologists found three terra-cotta coffins, the mint of the Vijayanagar kings with thousands of moulds of gold and silver coins, the ruins of Jain temples and a crystal head of the Buddha. At Kadkal, nineteen miles north of Maski, an old mint was found containing terra-cotta moulds for coins and furnaces. The copper coins show the figure of the Indian mythological man-bird (garuda) with folded hands on the obverse, and a Nagari inscription on the reverse.

Here at Kadkal some bronze Jain images were accidentally discovered by a cultivator while ploughing his field. The matter was brought to the notice of the Archaeological Department, and it was presumed that a Jain temple must have

existed in this site. This view was confirmed by the results of the excavation ; the brick pavement and the foundations of an edifice of considerable size provided sufficient evidence of the existence of a temple. Recent excavation at Kondapur has yielded an abundance of antiquities which show the development of life and culture of the Andhra dynasty in the first millennium B.C. These antiquities include pottery with ornamental designs, urns, incense-burners, vases, various kinds of earthenware for ordinary domestic use, terra-cotta figurines, baked clay bangles, ornamental clay beads and nearly two thousand coins.

The Chalukyan and the Rashtrakuta kings favoured rock-hewn architecture. At Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad are to be found notable examples of this form of architecture.

The Hindu dynasties have left great legacies of architecture in the Deccan. "In starting from the earliest times of which we have records as to the building practice," writes Mr H. V. Lancaster, Vice-President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, "some two thousand or more years ago, we find that building, like everything else in India of that time, most highly systematized and regulated, indeed to a degree almost comic to the Western mind. . . . Houses were to have specified frontage according to the rank of the occupant. . . . Forts, cities and camps were all subject to an elaborately detailed and meticulously specified system of planning, while temples, which by reason of their more substantial construction have stood for longer periods than other structures, show very clearly that they were designed in a well understood geometrical system."

The thousand-pillared temple at Warangal, the temples at Amba Jogai and the Buddhist chaitya hall at Ter are some of the notable examples of Hindu architecture. At Ittagi and Palampet, the plan of architecture is polygonal and star-shaped, and it is attributed to the Chalukyan dynasty. The great temple of Palampet was in a very bad condition ; but thanks to measures taken by the Department of Archaeology its roof and exquisite figure brackets, which are the finest specimens of the twelfth century Hindu sculpture, have been saved from complete destruction.

The material used in the construction of these mediaeval temples is principally massive blocks of granite, sometimes laid without mortar. Wall surfaces of the temples are richly decorated with sculpture in a profusion unknown in other countries. We should note that in striking contrast to the motifs of Muslim decoration, the Hindu edifices were adorned with a variety of symbolic representations and many of the decorative emblems came from the non-Aryan peoples of India.

The ancient site of Pratisthana or the modern Paithan, the "glorious capital of the Andhras," in the Aurangabad district is of considerable interest to archaeologists. According to legend, Brahma, after having created the world, selected the site on the Godavari as his residence. But he soon became jealous of the attractions of other holy places and therefore made the site of Paithan really worthy of a celestial abode for the gods. Acworth's interesting account of this ancient city, taken from the *Ballads of the Marathas*, runs as follows:

"The city of Pratisthana is the jewelled head ornament of the glory of Maharashtra and is beautified by pleasure-giving palaces, and chaityas soothing to the eye. It contains sixty-eight sacred places for the public, and as within its wall fifty heroes were born, it was called 'The City of Heroes.' "*

In the Pali books which contain accounts of the journeys of the wandering monks there are references to the prominent trade routes of India of the sixth century B. C. Paithan is mentioned there as a flourishing city situated on the banks of the Godavari. The city was specially noted for its textiles, embroidery work and various kinds of beads and these commodities were exported through Baragaza (Sanskrit: Bharukachchha) to the markets of Greece, Rome and Egypt. Even to this day Paithan is noted for its silk textiles, gold-thread embroidery work and wood-carving industry. Paithan is held sacred by the Hindus. There is a shrine dedicated to Eknath, the poet-saint of the sixteenth century. An annual fair is held in the month of March commemorating the demise of the saint. This fair is attended by a large number of pilgrims from all parts of India.

The Department of Archaeology, soon after its establishment, invited the attention of the Government to the importance of excavating the mounds and ruins of this site, and declared that such explorations would "throw ample light on the history of the Andhra kings." The preliminary work was started in 1937 and revealed six strata of habitations.

In an interesting account of Paithan excavations brought before the International Congress of Orientalists at Brussels in 1938, Mohammad Syed Yusuf, Assistant Director of Archaeology in the State, said:

"The antiquities unearthed in the course of the work, and the minor antiquities revealed in the course of the sifting operations, tallied almost completely with the cultural characteristics of each relative *stratum*. For instance, the topmost layer of buildings, constructed of stone-in-lime and brick-in-mud, found at a depth of about four feet from the surface, exposed to view British silver rupees, gold and silver jewellery, copper and pottery utensils, etc., all of recent origin. The next *stratum* appeared to belong to the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries, and yielded, along with other objects, coins of the early Asaf Jahi monarchs ; and the third layer was found to contain antiquities and silver and copper coins of the Mughal period. As regards the fourth *stratum,* the most interesting discovery was that the walls and foundations of this layer were found jumbled up with those of a former layer (the fifth). . . . Chief among the minor antiquities discovered in association with these layers were some Tughluq and Bahmani coins. . . . The sixth *stratum* was discovered under a thick layer of sand and river silt at a total depth of sixteen feet from the surface level."†

Every year the Department of Archaeology reports on fresh discoveries, and epigraphical investigations open out an inexhaustible source of knowledge of India's

* Jour. Bom. R.A.S. Vol. X, pp. 134-5.

† *Indian Art and Letters*. Vol. XII, No. 2.

past—as well as of prehistoric antiquities. In the Raichur district alone some 20,000 stone implements were collected in course of exploration of a number of prehistoric sites.

Among the important monuments surveyed by the Department in the Raichur district, there are a number of temples in a site called Gabbur. The architectural features of this group of temples belong to the tenth to twelfth centuries A.D. The plans are more or less stereotyped: square halls with projections on three sides serving the purpose of shrines generally dedicated to the Hindu Triad (Siva, Vishnu and Brahma). The pillars are "low and the interiors dark and mysterious," but the carving is elegant and vivacious "showing the artists' delight in the pleasures of life." Some of the principal temples of the group are enclosed on all sides with beautifully carved screens.

Some of the finest specimens extant of the Hindu (here we include the Buddhist and Jain) architecture are to be found in the State of Hyderabad. The archaeological researches of the last twenty-five years have lifted the veil of obscurity which hung over the period when the Deccan was under the rule of Hindu dynasties. The ruins are numerous, varied and scattered.

II

Recently the Archaeological Department has discovered a Buddhist site at Karkunda in the Telugu-speaking district of the State. The remains consist of two cells and two stupas hewn out of sand rock. In one stupa, carved out of a large boulder, there is a niche in which the figure of the Buddha is seen in full relief seated on the *padmasana* or Lotus Throne in the attitude of meditation. In another niche we see the Buddha receiving blessings from his mother Maya. It is interesting to note that this figure of Maya is considerably larger than that of her son and that the folds of her drapery reveal the characteristic skill of the artists of the second and third centuries A. D.

Two cells have been cut out of a single mass of rock. The walls of these cells are sculptured with many figures. Here we see the Buddha with a tall chauri bearer and the lifesize figures of dwarapalas carved in the conventional form.

Extensive remains of the Buddhist period have been found in the neighbourhood of Panigiri, a town situated at a distance of fifteen miles from Jangaon on the road to Nalgonda. The area to the south of this site is rich in the relics of Buddhist communities, the fragments of which are being collected and preserved by the Archaeological Department in its museum in the city of Hyderabad.

The archaeological remains of Amba Jogai, the modern Mominabad, are of great interest; for here we have three noteworthy historical relics: (1) the group of three underground excavations—two Brahmanical and one Jaina—to the north of the town ; (2) the old Deccan temple near the big bastion of the old Garhi to the west of the town ; and (3) the Chaubari temple in the centre of the town.

The principal monument among the group of the underground excavations is

the Jogi Sabha Mandap, an assembly room for devotees. In 1878 when Burgess visited the cave he found "the whole court, pavilion and cave filled to a considerable depth with earth and dung, the shelter being much sought by the village cattle during the heat of the day." The cave was also clogged up with mud and silt deposited by the Jivanti, the adjoining stream ; but after clearance it is exposed to its fullest dimensions and presents an impressive appearance. It has a large open court with a Nandi pavilion in the middle with four elegant elephants standing at the corners. A number of dilapidated Saivaite sculptures have been found in one of the cells of the cave.

It is interesting to note that there is a similar temple at Bhamburda near Poona, known as the temple of Panchalesvara. The temple itself represents conventional design in rock-hewn architecture and is a simple pillared hall. A Nandi pavilion stands in the courtyard in front of the temple. Another cave brought to light by the Mominabad excavations is the work of the Jain community.

Reference should be made to the archaeological remains at Nagai, an ancient city situated about a mile and a half to the south-west of Chitapur Station on the State Railways. Within an area of about four square miles, there are extensive ruins of temples, pillars, mosques, dwelling-houses, and public buildings with inscriptions. These inscriptions show that the oldest temple, the Arvat Kamban Gudi, was built during the reign of a Chalukya king in A.D. 1058.

Among all the Nagai ruins, the best preserved temple known as the Maruti Gudi has a parapet wall all round the sides of the terraced roof. Here we observe a number of carved slabs depicting various scenes from the Ramayana. The carvings are rather crude but they indicate a living interest in the episodes of the epic. Battle scenes, fights between warriors mounted on elephants, horses, and chariots, archers and swordsmen, the wickedness of the ten-headed Ravana—all these are the usual topics selected for carving. A tall *dipastambha* (pillar of lights) in front of this temple is an interesting specimen of art. There are 114 brackets for the support of lamps in addition to the many small niches between them in the shaft of the pillar itself.

Within a ruined Jain shrine, there is an image of a standing Jina. The figure may be one of the twenty-four Tirthankaras. It has a five-hooded snake canopy and a triple crown above. Another sculpture is that of a seated Jina with a seven-hooded snake over his head. Among the ruins at Nagai we find richly carved doorways, sculptures of male and female figures and a Nandi or Siva's bull in the usual seated posture.

One feature of Hindu temple architecture may be mentioned here. The spherical roof is divided into four main parts: *sikhara* (cupola), *sikha* (pinnacle), *sikhanta* (finial) and *sikhamani* (apex.). It is interesting to note that no distinction is made in the *Silpasastras* or Hindu manuals of architecture to the constructional details of the Vaishnava and Saiva temples, or the Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain shrines regarding the structure of their spherical roofs.

At Garla, a village near the Dornakal railway junction, there are several ruins

of old temples, some dedicated to Siva and others to Vishnu. The designs together with *sikharas, mandapas* and *dhwajastambhas* illustrate the main features of Hindu temple architecture. But the most interesting of the remains discovered in the neighbourhood of this village is a temple known as the Kondamma Gudi—the temple of the Hill Goddess. Originally it was probably a Siva temple, built not earlier than the twelfth century.

This temple shows some of the characteristics of Chalukyan architecture. It stands on a narrow terrace about three feet high and contains three shrines with the middle one facing the south and the rest facing the east and west. "As is common in Chalukyan temples," writes an Indian archaeologist, "none of these three shrines possesses a *pradakshina,* although each has an ante-chamber. The jambs and lintels of the ante-chambers and shrines are all overlaid with sculpture. The bottom of the jambs are carved with figures of devotees, dwarapalas with clubs, drums, etc., and female figures with chauris in their hands. The upper portions of the jambs are divided into five or six fascias carved with flowers, creepers or geometrical designs with a pilaster in the middle. The lintels of all the three shrines have panels in the middle, with gaja lakshmi bathed by elephants."*

The walls of the temple are double throughout. The inner walls of the shrines and ante-chambers are built of well-dressed stone blocks laid horizontally and those of the outer walls are constructed with upright blocks with mouldings at the top and bottom. It is to be noted that the whole structure is erected with mortar and that the joints of stone blocks are fitted in a manner which reveals the great skill of the Hindu architects of the period.

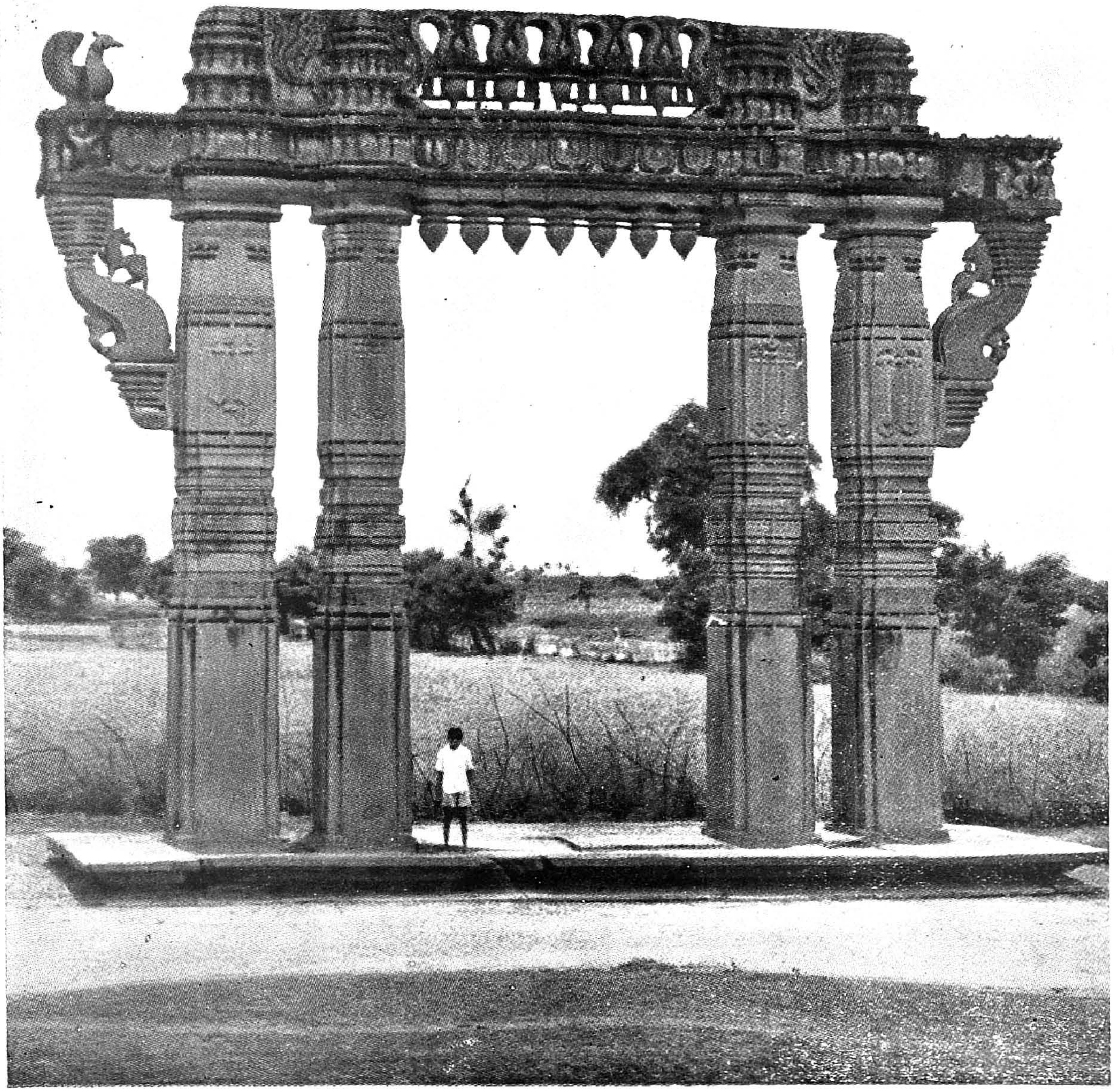
Here we also find the preponderance of ornamental designs over architectural forms. The well carved pillars supporting the mandapas, the flowery decorations of its inner walls, the carved lotuses of its ceilings, and the elaborate ornamental cornice over the exterior walls of the temple are the special features of Chalukyan designs.

The temple at Hanumkonda, the ancient capital, is one of the most perfect specimens of Chalukyan architecture in the Deccan. According to an inscription on a pillar at the gateway, it was erected in A.D. 1162 by Pratapa Rudra Deva, the reigning sovereign of Telingana.

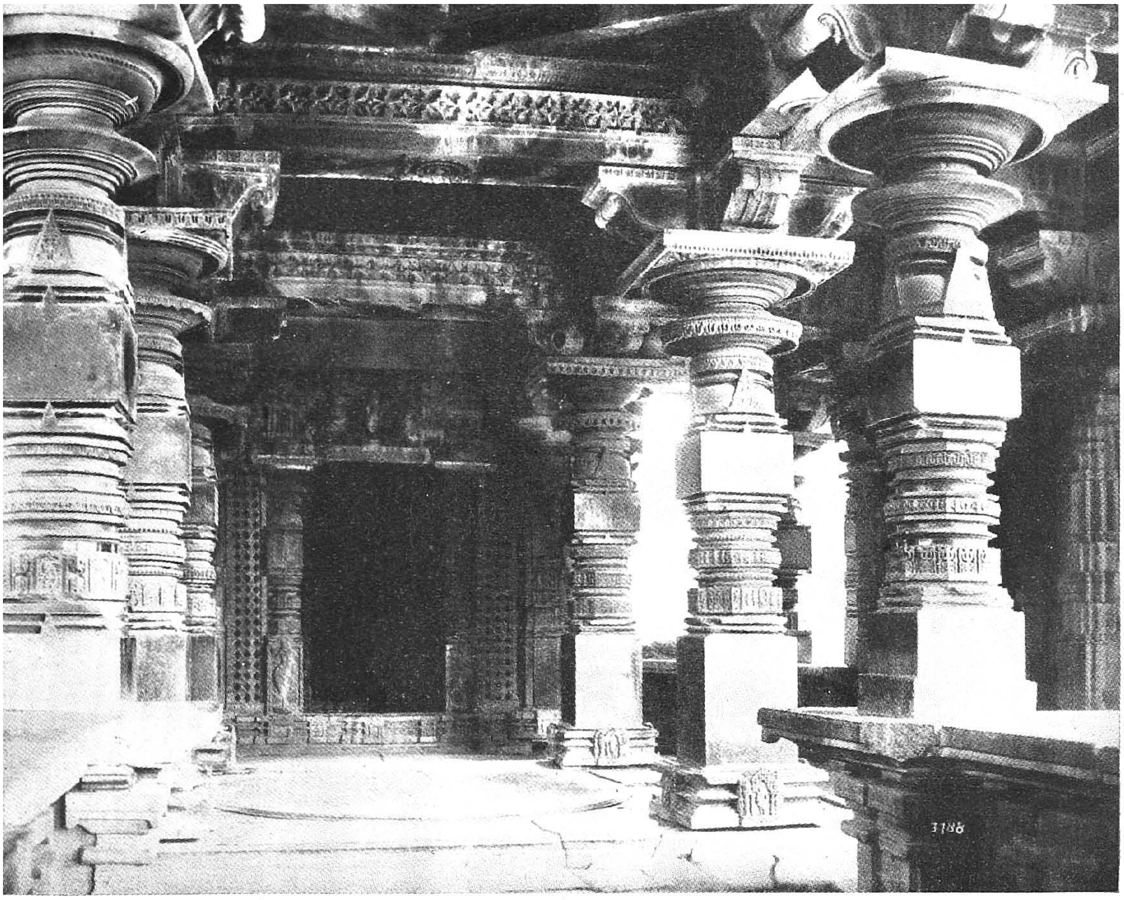
The temple consists of three shrines of very considerable dimensions, dedicated to Siva, Vishnu and Surya. The shrines are arranged round a spacious central hall. In front of the temple we find a large mandapa supported by about three hundred pillars disposed in a varied and complicated pattern. Altogether the temple has one thousand pillars.

"The arrangements of the pillars and the variety of spacing are in pleasing subordination to the general plan. The pillars of the mandapa are plain, while those of the temple are richly carved, but without being overdone, and it is only in pairs that they are of the same design. Some of the other details are of great beauty, especially the doorways to the recesses, the pierced slabs used for windows, and the

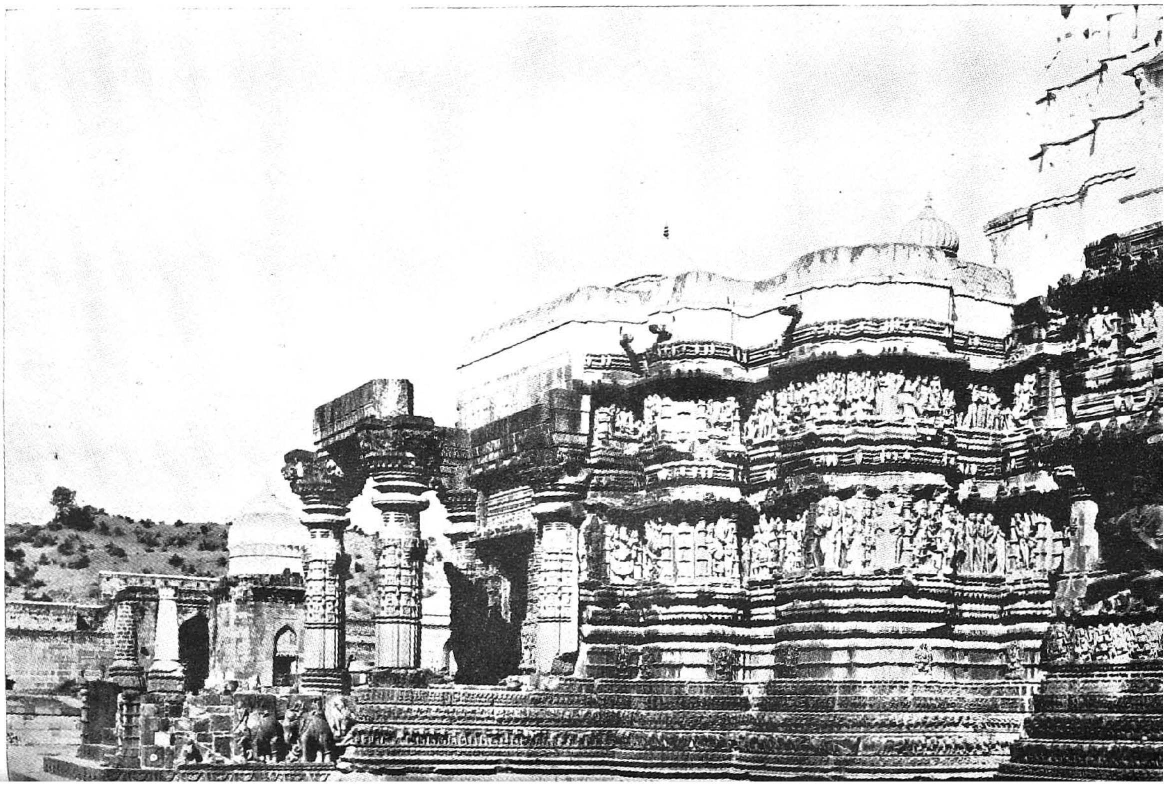
* T. Shrinivas: "Garla and Its Remains." Journal Hyderabad Arch. Soc. 1917.



A gateway, Warangal Fort



The thousand pillared temple, Hanumakonda, Hyderabad



Jagannatha temple, Aundha

very elegant open work by which the bracket shafts are attached to the pillars. The arrangement of three shrines joined together is capable of giving a greater variety of effect, and of light and shade than the plainer forms, and the appearance of the whole is further improved by the terrace about three feet high and from ten to fifteen feet wide on which the temple stands."*

Between the mandapa and the temple, we see the pavilion for the Nandi, and a large bull of polished black basalt. The entrances to the shrines are of great architectural beauty. They are built in the pillar-and-lintel style, and executed with the utmost skill. The lay-out of the temple at Hanumkonda was extensive but such an ambitious undertaking could not have been finished during one king's reign, especially in a period of war.

An inscription in Telugu, commemorating the heroism of a Muhammadan army officer named Shitab Khan in a Hindu temple is of interest. According to Dr Hirananda Sastri, Shitab Khan was by birth a Hindu of a lower caste but became a Muhammadan convert. The laudatory inscription in his honour in the temple was probably a challenge to the Hindu caste hierarchy.

In the fortress of Warangal† there are four gateways known as *Kirttistambhas* or Towers of Fame. They are of one pattern, facing one another. The stone of the arches is grey granite. The distance between the north and south gateways is 480 feet and between those on the east and west 433 feet. Within this ample space there was a temple of unusual size, but it was never completed. Only a few pillars remain standing at one end, but the raised foundation and mouldings of this immense edifice can be traced. The construction of the shrine was begun by Rajah Ganpati Deva.

The architectural designs of these four magnificent gateways should be of special interest to historians of Indian architecture. "Their main interest," writes Fergusson, "lies in their being the lineal descendants of the four gateways at Sanchi, and they are curious as exemplifying how, in the course of a thousand years or thereabouts, a wooden style of building may lose all traces of its origin as clearly as they do ; for it seems most unlikely that any such form could have been invented by any one using stone construction, and that only."

The carvings of the stones used in these gateways are elegant and elaborate, richly interspersed with figures and emblems. One of the emblems is a *hansa* or swan at each end of the arch.

A new approach through a recently constructed wooden gate in the northern compound wall has considerably facilitated access to the temple and saves the visitor the uncomfortable, circuitous walk through the narrow lanes hitherto used.

Among the ruins of Warangal there are a great number of smaller temples and shrines built in the traditional Chalukyan style. Excavations have already brought to light many treasures of Hindu sculpture and carved panels.

An English artist has recorded her impressions of art treasures found at Waran-

* Syed Hoosain Belgrami and C. Willmott: *Historical and Descriptive Sketch of H. H. the Nizam's Dominions,* 1884.

† Warangal is a corruption of Orukkal, meaning solitary rock.

gal. "There is such minute carving of borders, patterns like stencils, ropes of pearl interlaced, tiny knobby patterns, finely wrought dragons on the tops of elephants each prancing on the head of the other in a glorious frieze. I noticed a beautiful piece of a Durga, eight-armed, with four attendants each side. The grace of these most striking, perfect proportions of women *hanchees* with the knee up. I photographed a fine triangular corner piece of a dragon with floral pattern very common to these temples, the same as on the ceiling of the Hanumkonda temple. Another panel was of two women light as air in ballet dress, and on each side a peacock dancing on the back of a swan. I never saw more original or interesting bits of carving—a tree of life, a horse and rider, all most unusual. A crystal lingam was found the other day undamaged ; all sorts of treasures."*

Warangal was one of the great centres of the Telugu people, and the populous country must have been intensively cultivated. There are remains of old irrigation works built by the Warangal kings.

The Pakhal lake is probably one of the largest artificial lakes in India. It is some twelve miles square, and is enclosed on all sides, except the west, by ranges of low and densely wooded hills. The lake has been made by throwing an embankment across a river, which had cut its way over a western outcrop of the Vindhya Hills, between two low headlands. It is about a mile in length.

* Marguerite Milward: "An Artist's Impression of Hyderabad State." *Asiatic Review*, January, 1936.

CHAPTER THREE

ROCK-HEWN ARCHITECTURE

The heritage of the ancient monuments in the State includes a number of unique rock-cut monasteries and sanctuaries. This form of architecture is found in many parts of the world, and according to some archaeologists its original home was Egypt and Assyria.

In India rock-hewn architecture reached its highest development both in respect of technique and conception in the region of the Western Ghats. Here monasteries and chapels were carved out of the living rock. The perpendicular cliffs of the Western Ghats, composed of horizontal strata of amygdaloid and cognate trap formations of considerable thickness and marked uniformity of texture provided an ideal site for the purpose of excavating permanent monastic establishments for the Buddhist and Jain communities. It is to be noted that the designers of the Indian rock-hewn edifices chose the solid rock face, and not an existing cave, to execute their plan. Out of this, halls, chapels, double storeyed monastic abodes, refectories, stone cisterns, pillars, massive arches and horse-shoe windows were patiently carved with the primitive hammer, pick and chisel. These skilfully wrought excavations are usually referred to as "caves," implying that they were natural tunnels in the hillside, the haunt of aboriginal people! Obviously, to call such creations "caves" is misleading. Rock-hewn architecture is perhaps a more accurate term ; for halls, pillars, corridors, etc., were hewn out rather than structurally erected. That is, as Percy Brown puts it, "rock-architecture to all intents and purposes is not architecture—it is sculpture, but sculpture on a grand and magnificent scale."

Rock-hewn architecture is, of course, mainly internal. These rock-hewn forms consist chiefly of two parts: chaityas or chapels, and viharas or monasteries. The general plan of the chaitya hall is like that of a three-aisled cathedral with semi-circular apse. Indeed, it resembles the basilica of the early Christian church. It has a broad, central nave for the congregaton with rows of pillars forming aisles for ritualistic circumambulation. At the end of the hall is an apse accommodating a stupa. The stupa is usually a hemispherical dome surmounted by one or more honorific umbrellas. Originally these umbrellas were the insignia of royalty. Three main parts of the stupa are basis, cupola and kiosk or altar-like structure (harmika). In pre-Buddhist times, according to the oldest Aryan tradition, a stupa was a sepulchral mound erected for great rulers (chakkavatti). But the Buddha gave a new meaning to the stupa proclaiming that the same honour should be given to "The Awakened Ones and to their disciples." In his conversation with Ananda, he said: "And as they treat the remains of a king of kings, so, Ananda, should they treat the remains of the Tathagata. At the four cross-roads a dagoba should be erected to the Tathagata. And whosoever shall there place garlands or perfumes, or paint, or

make salutation there, or become in its presence calm in heart—that shall long be to them for a profit and a joy."*

Thus the stupas which were originally objects of hero worship became symbols of illuminated spirits of Tathagatas or Enlightened Ones. Some of the stupas belonging to the early Buddhist period had recesses for oil lamps: and it was a common practice, according to Pali scholars, to illuminate the whole monument so that it might appear as one radiating dome of light.

The stupa has gone through various stages of development. The earliest ones, for example, did not adopt the shape of a perfect hemisphere but rather took the form of a spheric calotte. There are also variations in the structure of the kiosk (harmika). According to Parker, there are as many as six types of the cupola, namely, bell shape, water-pot shape, bubble shape, heap-of-paddy shape, lotus shape, and nelli-fruit shape†

The cosmic symbolism of the Buddhist stupa has been subjected to various interpretations. Alluding to the symbolic character and symbolical terminology of the main features of the stupa, Havell writes: "The stupa simulated the blue overarching vault of the heavens ; the tee or pinnacle of stone umbrellas which crowned the summit, representing the succession of higher spiritual planes leading up to nirvana."

Anagarika Brahmachari Govinda, a Buddhist scholar, writes that the main element of the stupa, the cupola, "imitates the infinite dome of the all-embracing sky which includes both destruction and creation, death and re-birth. The early Buddhists expressed these principles by comparing the cupola of the stupa to the water bubble and the egg or *anda* as the symbol of latent creative power (as such *anda* was also a synonym for the universe in the oldest Indian mythology), while the kiosk or altar-like structure (*harmika*) which rose on the summit of the cupola, symbolised the sanctuary enthroned above the world, beyond death and re-birth. . . . The resemblance of the *harmika* to a sacrificial altar is perhaps not unintentional, because the Holy One, instead of sacrificing other beings, sacrifices himself to the world."‡

The kiosk or harmika contains relics (*dhatu*) and therefore the stupa is called *dhatu-garbha*. It is interesting to note in this connection that the architectural term for a Hindu sanctuary is *garbha-gṛha*, literally womb. In other words, the sanctuary is regarded as the centre of creative energy. The stupa in Buddhist chaityas takes the place of the Christian altar. The Singhalese term for the stupa is dagoba and the Burmese call it a pagoda.

Greater artistic care is bestowed on the excavation and decoration of the chaitya halls than on the viharas. The early form of timber construction has been reproduced in rock-hewn architecture. The reproduction of wooden forms in rock structures

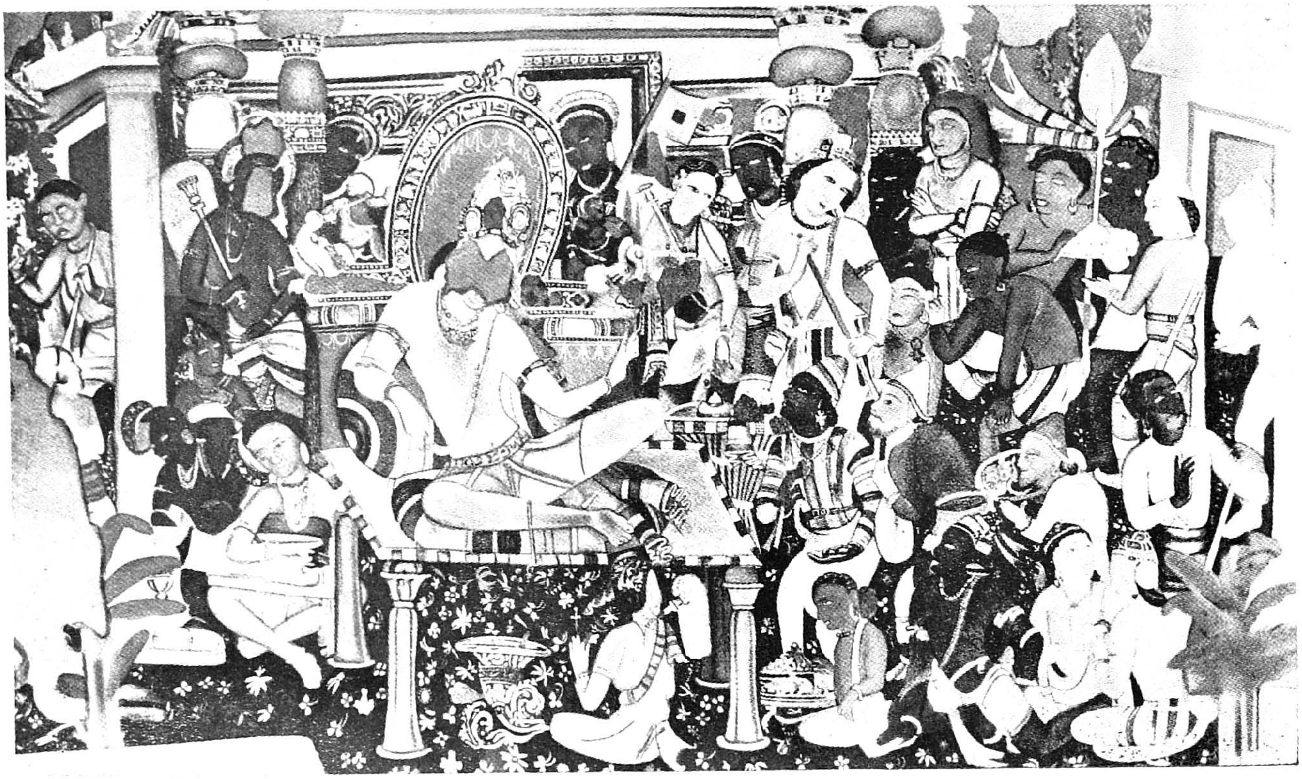
* Trans. by Rhys Davids.

† H. Parker: *Ancient Ceylon.*

‡ Anagarika Brahmacari Govinda: "Some Aspects of Stupa Symbolism," Jour. Ind. Soc. Oriental Art, Vol. II.

A design on the ceiling, Ajanta

Flying Gandharvas and Apsaras, Ajanta. Cave XVII



Pulakesin II receiving a Persian envoy, a fresco from Ajanta

A female figure, Ajanta. Cave I

affords an interesting clue to the understanding of the pattern of rock-hewn monuments. The vaulted roofs of the chaitya halls, constructed by Indian carpenters and builders, seem to have been worked out on somewhat similar principle as the arch-braced timber roofs of the Gothic builders of Europe evolved many centuries later. The designs of the chaityas and the viharas are adopted from all the earlier constructions which were of wood. Mortice holes and various other indications show that a large amount of timber was used in the structure of the chaityas and viharas. Below the horse-shoe shaped windows there were, for example, wooden screens ; or the nave was braced with wooden ribs. The principle on which the later chaitya windows were constructed in stone is founded upon the traditional form used in wooden structures.

There is a structural chaitya hall at Ter, the ancient Tagara, in the Naldrug district of the State of Hyderabad. It is wholly built of large size bricks carefully laid in a cement of clay. The barrel-vaulted roof is also of brick ingeniously corbelled inwards to form the vault, and rising to a ridge, all well plastered. The mandapa in front has a flat roof of wooden beams supported by wooden pillars and overlaid by brick and plastered outside. The façade of this chaitya is of special interest, and, as Fergusson says, "If we compare this façade with that of the Buddhist rock-cut chaitya at Ellora, the close resemblance in style, and even in details, derived from earlier wood constructions, is very apparent."

The entrance to the chaitya has an elaborate façade of porch. Above it is a large horse-shoe shaped window, like the great west window in a Gothic cathedral. It throws its light directly on the stupa or altar. The strong glare from outside is broken up by the lunettes and tracery of the screen and is thrown from behind the worshippers on the altar. It produces an impressive effect of light and shade among surrounding colonnades.

Each of these columns has an individuality of its own, and no attempt has been made to standardize any particular form. Sometimes they are octagonal and stumpy, and they have capitals of various shapes containing sculptured animals, the Buddhist Wheel or Dhamma Chakka and other symbolic designs. These columns approximate to their wooden prototypes.

It has also been suggested that the form of the chaitya resembles the hut of the Todas, the aboriginal tribes of south India. These huts are built with bamboos fixed in rows into the ground ; they are then bent over and tied in the centre to a ridge, and further strengthened by horizontal purlins on which straw or similar thatching materials are laid.

The viharas are excavated adjoining the chaityas and generally consist of a central hall surrounded on three sides by cells for the monks. The size of a cell is about nine square feet and has a rock-cut slab for a bed. In the earlier period, the viharas were monasteries, but later on they became chapels as well. When the monks became numerous, the size of the monasteries had to be increased and cells were arranged externally around three of the sides of a square or rectangular hall. In some viharas there is a sanctum in the centre of the rear wall containing a large

image of the Buddha. Broadly speaking, the planning of these monastic establishments is not dissimilar to that which prevails in Europe. The open court of the early viharas may, for example, be compared with the cloister-garth (court) of a Benedictine monastery.

The construction of temples by excavating the living rock was, as Fergusson points out, really more economical than quarrying the stone and then transporting it. Besides, horizontal strata of amygdaloid and other cognate trap formations found in western India were readily accessible and easily worked. The other advantage of rock-cut structure was that once hewn out they did not need much repair and thus maintained their essential architectural features. Today they are often as perfect as when they were erected over a thousand years ago.

In executing the designs of rock-hewn architecture, the Indian masons and sculptors have shown a high standard of efficiency. One is indeed puzzled to find so high a level of technical accuracy attained with the use, as is supposed, of the somewhat crude implements at their disposal. They made accurate surveys, worked out precisely the architectonic designs and succeeded in getting the structural angles, lines and planes extraordinarily correct. It also appears that they had considerable knowledge of rock-formations and joints.

There are indications that the actual work of excavation must have proceeded from the top downwards. This procedure eliminated the necessity of elaborate scaffolding, as the natural rock-surface underneath provided the working platform.

II

The Buddhist rock-hewn monuments at Ajanta are situated "in a wild and lonely glen amid the most romantic surroundings." The town of Ajanta is about sixty miles north-west of Aurangabad and the excavations lie about four miles from the town.

It is noteworthy that the Buddhist rock-hewn monasteries were principally excavated along the trade routes, where, like the Christian monasteries of the Middle Ages, they ministered to the needs of travellers. In former times Ajanta lay on one of the main routes from the north to the kingdom of the south and was known as the "Gate of the Deccan."

The beginnings of India's intercourse with China may be traced to the second century B. C. or perhaps earlier. Since the introduction of Mahayana Buddhism, there had been a flow of Chinese pilgrims into India. Some of them left interesting records of the life of the monks. Fa-Hien was probably the first Chinese Buddhist who came at the beginning of the fifth century. He referred to Ajanta when he wrote: "There is a country named Dakshina where there is a monastery dedicated to the Buddha, and which has been hewn out from a large hill of rock." But this monastery was out of the way, and perilous to traverse. Consequently he was unable to go there after visiting Pulakesi, the King of the Deccan, at his capital. Yuan Chwang, who came to study and collect Buddhist scriptures during the middle

of the seventh century, travelled more extensively than his predecessors and visited several shrines. He mentioned that monasteries had been built by "quarrying the rocks" and that the monks went there every year "to spend the retreat of the rainy season." From his narrative we gather that in south India there were several Buddhist monasteries inhabited by thousands of monks.

The excavations at Ajanta remained hidden in the Deccan jungles for nearly 1200 years until accidentally discovered in 1829. Within a decade or so these rock-hewn monuments began to attract the attention of European scholars, the foremost of them being James Fergusson.

The chapels and monasteries were excavated in the face of almost perpendicular scarp of rock, about 250 feet high, sweeping round in a curve like the crescent moon. They were not the work of any one period ; on the contrary, they covered a time ranging from the second century B.C. to the seventh century A.D. None of the four chaitya halls are exactly alike and the changes in the execution of decorative motifs vary from period to period. There were, however, two well defined periods of excavation, conditioned by two distinct phases of the evolution of the Buddhist creed. The Hinayana sect established, for example, a simple type of architecture in the period between the second century B.C. and the second century A.D. With the advent of the Mahayana system of Buddhism, elaborate façades, carved pillars, profusion of sculptured frieze came to be represented in the architectural character of the chaityas and viharas. Nothing could signify more graphically the sources of inspiration of Buddhist art than these two systems of Buddhism. Ajanta provides a striking illustration of the evolution of Buddhist rock-hewn architecture, sculpture and painting, as here it can be followed throughout its stages of development.

Certain aspects of these two systems of Buddhism in so far as they have influenced the outlook and cultural life of the Buddhists may be outlined here. In the Hinayana there is nothing which could rejuvenate the cultural life of a people. The goal is to attain the ideal of Arhatship or the state of nirvana through austere discipline, and disciplinary measures are rigidly formulated. The Hinayana creed is the product of cloistered monks extremely conservative in the interpretation of the teachings of the Buddha. It should be noted that in the Hinayana doctrine there is but one Bodhisattva, and that is the Buddha himself.

In the Mahayana the aim is to attain Bodhisattvahood to which *all* may aspire. The great difference between the Arhat and the Bodhisattva is that the former is intent upon his own enlightenment, while the Bodhisattva wishes to help all creatures and bring them to full enlightenment. The Mahayana proclaims that we are all potential Bodhisattvas and thus the distinction between monk and layman is lessened. Since the goal set before the Mahayana system is universal enlightenment, it allows an infinite variety of experience without which we cannot comprehend a cosmic view of the world. Every object in this world is related to every other object like the Indra-jala or Indra's net, to mention a favourite analogy of the Mahayana scholars. This net, made of precious gems, hangs over Indra's abode. In each one of these gems are found reflected all the other gems composing the net. There-

fore, when we hold this net up, we see in it not only the entirety of the net but every one of the gems in it. The Mahayana scriptures are full of rich images and symbols, and in these the artists have found abundant sources of inspiration for their artistic expression.

The difference between the two systems is explicit in the terms used in their designation. The Hinayana means "little vehicle" and the Mahayana "great vehicle." The idea is that the Mahayana system is like a vehicle large enough to carry all beings to salvation ; while the Hinayana is just a small carriage which can only accommodate the few.

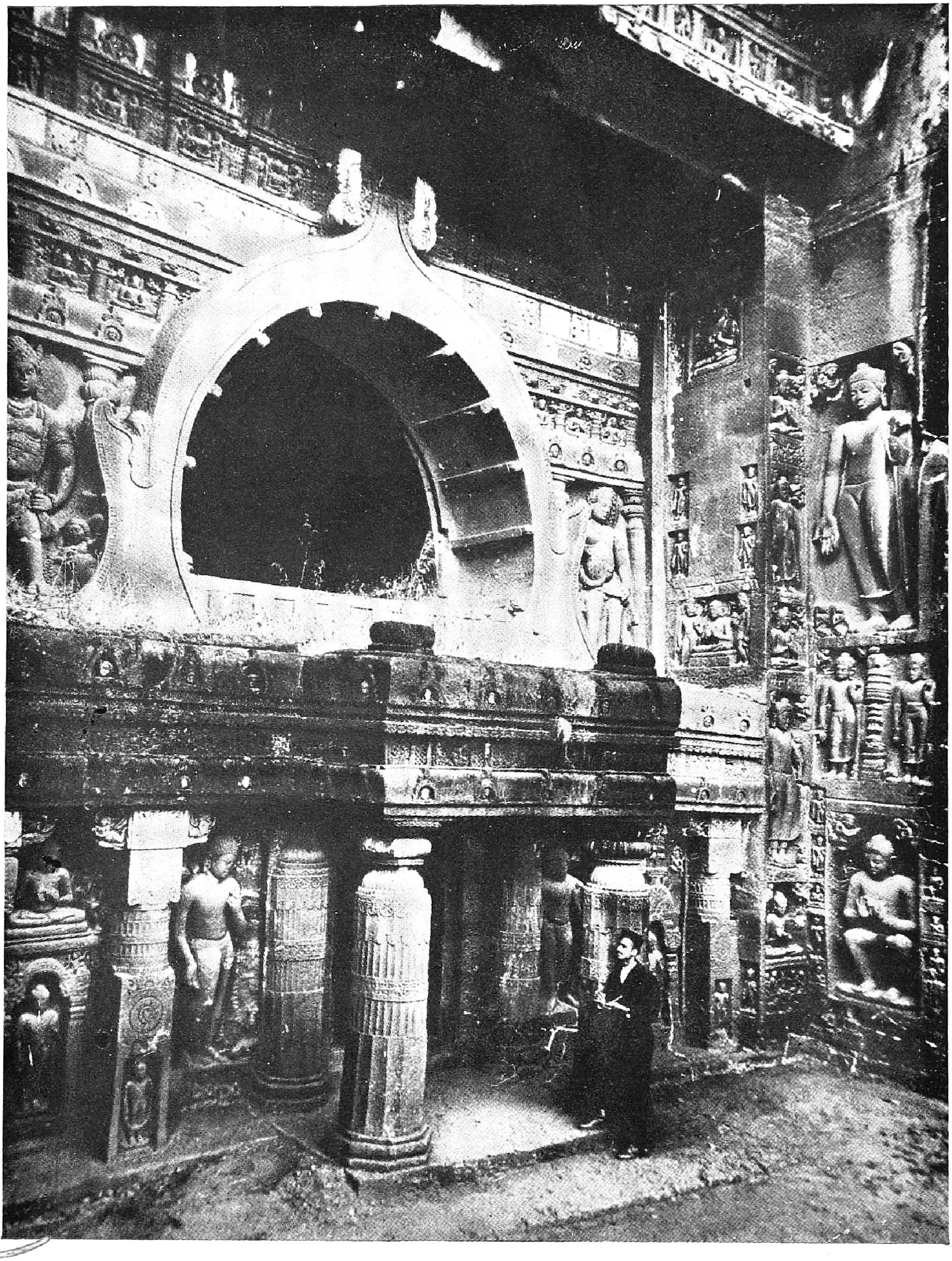
Now there are twenty-nine excavations in all at Ajanta, four of which are chaityas and the remaining viharas. They extend for over a third of a mile east and west around the crescent-shaped face of the hill, and have been numbered in sequence beginning with number one at the western extremity and finishing with number twenty-nine at the eastern end. The five excavations—number eight, nine, ten, twelve and thirteen—belong to the period of the Hinayana and the rest to the Mahayana movement. They may thus be divided into two groups representing the two forms of Buddhism. The two series together with their approximate dates are as follows:

Hinayana series—from second century B.C. to second century A.D.
Chaityas number nine and ten.
Viharas number eight, twelve and thirteen.

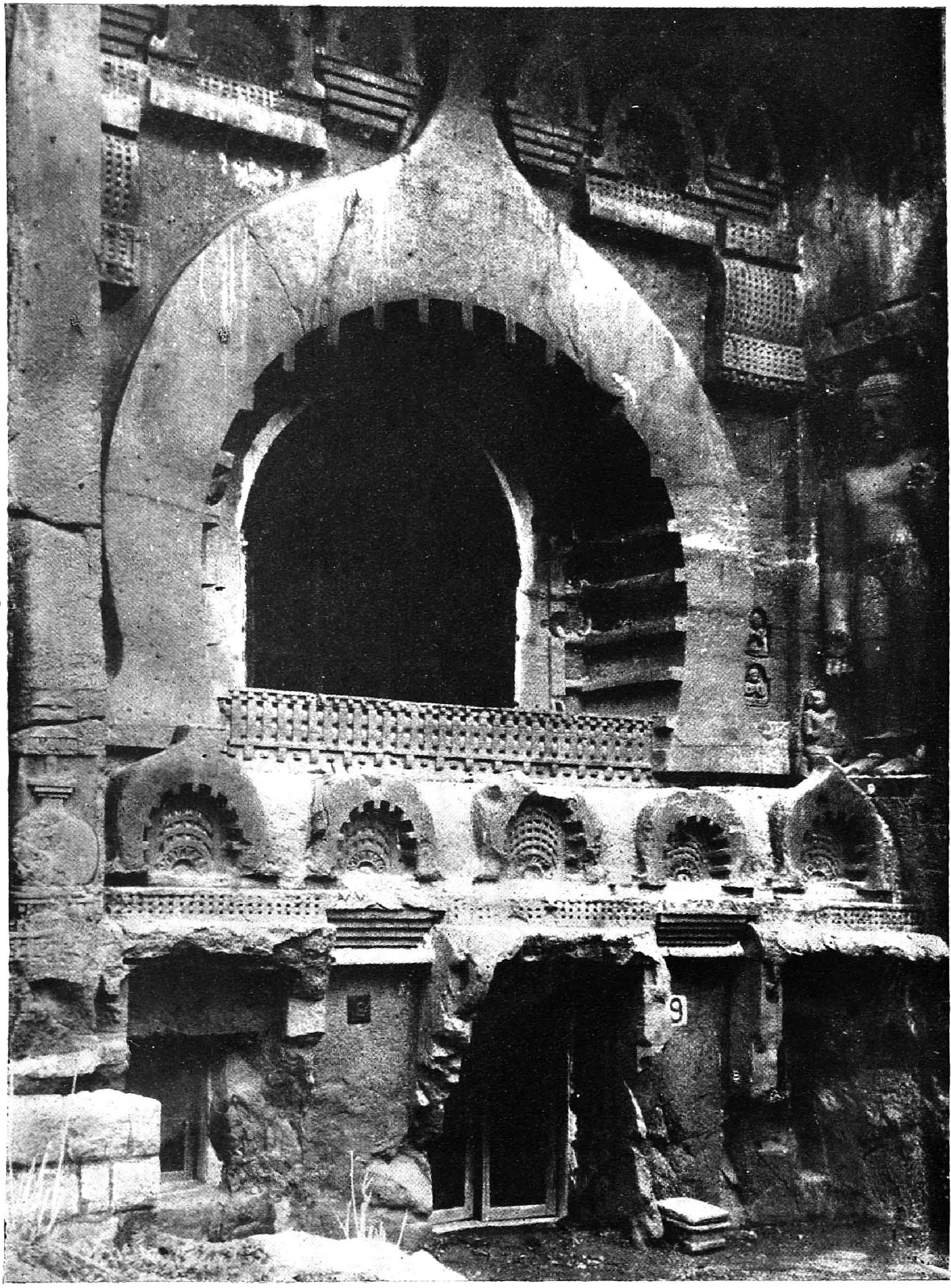
Mahayana series—from 450 A.D. to 642 A.D.
Chaityas number nineteen and twenty-six.
Viharas number one to seven, eleven, fifteen to eighteen, twenty to twenty-five and twenty-eight and twenty-nine.

It is not possible to describe here the structural features of each of these chaityas and viharas. One must be content to give an outline of the general design of the chaityas number nineteen and twenty-six, and of the viharas number one and sixteen. Both in design and execution these four may be selected as examples of the high watermark of rock-hewn architecture of the Mahayana period.

The chaitya number nineteen is not large but it is singularly attractive. Fortunately it is left in a good state of preservation and thus provides an excellent example of rock-hewn architecture of the Mahayana period. While the entire height of the exterior is thirty-eight feet with a width of thirty-two feet, its interior measures forty-six feet by twenty-four feet. In its proportion the chaitya is somewhat like Trinity Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral. There are two pillars in front and the interior is divided into nave and aisles by fifteen pillars. Each pillar is eleven feet high and has richly patterned shafts. In this chaitya the wooden construction is completely discarded and the ribs of the vaulted roof, the umbrella over the stupa and all the decorations of the façade are carved out of the roof itself. Unlike the chaityas number nine and ten, it has elaborate carving and tracery.



Façade, Ajanta. Cave XIX



The Chaitya, Ajanta. Cave IX

The stupa stands on a low pedestal within the centre of the apse. The stupa is a composite monolith some twenty-two feet high. Above the dome which is more than a semicircle rises a tall finial in tiers, consisting of a harmika, three umbrellas of varying size and a vase. "The soaring height and general intention of this stupa," writes Percy Brown, "recall the tapering spires of reliquaries found in some continental cathedrals."*

Another interesting feature of the chaitya is a pillared portico of elegant design. Its roof forms a massive entablature, the upper surface of which was probably used as a choir. The large window of the chaitya has retained the traditional horse-shoe shape used in the wooden structures but here it is carved out of the rock. On either side of the arch is a large figure of Yaksha or giver of wealth and prosperity.

The chaitya is richly sculptured and contains a number of striking figures showing a high quality of workmanship. To mention only the figure of a Naga king in a side-chapel to the left of the portico. He is accompanied by his wife and a female attendant, and is protected by the hoods of a seven-headed cobra.†

The chaitya number twenty-six resembles in its architectural style the one which has just been described, but it is larger and richer in decorative feature than any of the chaityas at Ajanta. During the period of its excavation Ajanta was not only an abode of Buddhist monks, but a seat of learning. Many benefactors helped to excavate chaityas and viharas, as the need arose, for accommodating pupils. The excavation of the area in the neighbourhood of this imposing chaitya hall led to the discovery of a fairly large-sized court and two side chaityas. The court has beautiful carvings arranged in panels on all sides.

The chaitya number twenty-six is excavated from the rock to a depth of sixty-eight feet, a breadth of thirty-six feet and a height of thirty-one feet. Twenty-six columns, each twelve feet high, surround it and support the frieze above which rise the stone ribs. The apse and walls of the aisles behind the columns are profusely ornamented. The frieze projects a few inches over the architrave, and is divided into compartments which are also ornamented with various designs.

The stupa has the traditional cylindrical shape with a mandapa top ; but here it is overlaid with a wealth of carving chiefly of images of the Buddha in various attitudes. Through the window, a shaft of light is cast on the stupa which is twenty feet high. As a whole the stupa in this chaitya seems to lack the graceful proportions and rhythmic effect of the earlier ones.

The lower part of the chaitya is much damaged ; the broad pillared portico along its entire front supported by four columns has disappeared. Above the portico is the chaitya window against a background of richly carved statues.

* Percy Brown: *Indian Architecture,* 1940.

† Professor Vogel writes: "The Nagas or snake demons who, as water-sprites and bringers of rain, had special importance for the tillers of the soil. They are usually portrayed as hybrid creatures, partly human, partly reptile ; but Buddhist art both in India and Java represents them, as a rule, in human shape with a hood of snake-heads, which encircles the head like an aureole." *Buddhist Art in India, Ceylon and Java,* 1936.

It has already been mentioned that there are several statues of the Buddha in the chaitya described above. But one of these well-preserved images is an impressive work of art and deserves to be noted here. This image with lower, half-closed eyelids and the right hand raised to impart blessings appears to symbolize not only the reflective inner life of the Buddha but also the quintessence of his teachings: "Fear not, I teach the way to bliss—to bliss through thine own efforts."

Among the viharas which are most elegant and greatly admired mention may be made of only two—number sixteen and number one. Both belong to the Mahayana series of excavations. On the progress of the elaboration of the style, Percy Brown writes: "After a period of experiment, as shown in the diversified character of the first group of the Mahayana viharas, the plan of the monastic hall becomes more or less standardized, although the detailed treatment of the succeeding groups shows considerable variety and fertility of invention. Of the remaining examples, the finest are numbers one, four, sixteen, seventeen, twenty-one and twenty-three, the most superb of the whole series being attained in number sixteen, dating from early in the sixth century, while the supreme efflorescence of the style may be studied in the carved and painted embellishment of number one, which was probably produced a century later (*c.* A.D. 625). Both numbers one and sixteen are of approximately the same size and designed on much the same lines, each having an exterior verandah sixty-five feet long, a main hall sixty-five feet square containing a surrounding aisle formed by a colonnade of twenty pillars. Around the hall and verandah of number sixteen is recessed a series of sixteen square cells, and on the innermost side, cut deep into the rock, is a spacious sacrarium containing a seated figure of the Buddha."*

The vihara number sixteen has a central and two side doors ; the portico is supported by two pilasters and six octagonal columns, and the front aisle is seventy-four feet long. On each side of the shrine are two octagonal pillars and two pilasters, screening off the aisles. These aisles are lighted by small square windows near the roof.

In the vihara number one the rock-hewn architecture and its ornamentation reached a degree of artistic excellence not attained by the earlier age. It probably marks the period when the Mahayana Buddhism was at the zenith of its power. Here the façade, the elaborate entablature of which is carried round the entire front, is decorated with sculpture. The portico has a chamber at each end and a wide door in the centre, with profusely carved jambs and entablatures, leading into the large hall. Six columns and two pilasters of the portico have square bases and carved bracket capitals but here the decorative scheme into the earlier excavations has been used on a larger scale. The wings of the bracket of the column are ornamented with flying figures of *gandharvas* or celestial musicians and *apsaras* or celestial attendants on Indra.

The exuberance of sculptures and paintings in Ajanta, especially those belonging

* Percy Brown: *Indian Architecture*, 1940.

to the later Mahayana period, leaves an unforgettable impression on the mind. Here Buddhist art attained not only the zenith of artistic development but also revealed a rhythm of life contrary to the austere spirit of the Hinayana sect. The earlier chaityas and viharas contained little sculpture and the ornamental designs on pillars and capitals were simple. As we have seen, under the influence of the Mahayana doctrine sculptured figures, paintings, richly ornamented brackets, elaborately carved pillars began to assume greater prominence. While some of the earlier sanctuaries did not contain more than one conventional figure of the Buddha, in the later ones the Buddha images together with those of the Bodhisattvas became numerous. Like the artists of the Middle Ages, the Buddhist artists were never tired of enshrining the Buddha and Bodhisattvas in various moods. The images of the Buddha blessing his disciples, or as a preacher of the Good Law, or in the posture of meditation show the Buddhist sculpture in its most sensitive form.

In most of the later chaityas and viharas the rock foundation is overlaid with a wealth of symbolic and ornamental designs. The subjects depicted in the sculptured reliefs are extremely complex as they were obviously not part of a static conception but superimposed from time to time through the devotion of the initiated in accordance with their religious urge.

Both in sculptures and paintings the Buddha is represented in various postures and, as Lord Zetland observes, "whatever may be the effect produced by these images upon the aesthetic sensibility of a foreigner, there is no doubt as to their meaning for an Indian." Some of the conventional postures of the Buddha may be described here.

We see the Buddha seated on a throne, upheld by two figures of lions, called the lion seat (*simhasana*). His feet rest on a lotus blossom and his hands in front of his breast holding the little finger of the left and between the thumb and forefinger of the right. This is known as the *dharmachakra* posture ; that is, the Buddha in the act of teaching the inner meaning of the Wheel of the Law. This posture should not, however, be confused with that of *dharmachakra-pravartana* which means the starting of the Wheel of the Law. The difference lies in the mystic gestures (*mudra*) of the hands. It should be noted that the figure of the seated Buddha on a throne represents him as *Chakravartin* or the Buddha-King with the quality of universal sovereignty.

Another posture is that of meditation called *dhyana-mudra* ; that is, in the bliss of that absorption which expresses the achievement of absolute harmony by the conquest of passion and desire. It is perhaps the most impressive of all conventional figures of the seated Buddha and expresses that perfect peace on his face which passes all understanding. Then there is the posture *abhaya-mudra*, in which the Buddha imparts protection and inspires his disciples not to fear the evil of existence.

Another conventional figure of the Buddha should be mentioned. We see him rapt in deep meditation with the gesture of touching the earth. This is called the *bhumisparsa-mudra*. That the inner meaning of such a gesture is to give

expression to his attainment of *bodhi* or Enlightenment may seem far-fetched, but to those who are familiar with the doctrine of Mahayana Buddhism, it represents the affirmatoin of life on earth. To the Mahayana Buddhists the earth is the foundation of one's spiritual experience and the attainment of *bodhi* or Enlightenment and of *moksha* or Liberation is possible without fixing one's gaze upon heaven or life to come.

III

So far we have dealt with the architecture and sculpture of Ajanta. It now remains to turn to the frescoes which constitute the greatest monuments of India's achievement in the domain of painting. Both the rock-hewn shrines at Ajanta and the wall paintings which decorate them are among the most precious treasures in the artistic heritage of India. By their restoration and preservation, the State Department of Archaeology has put the world of culture under great obligation. "Very rarely in the world's history," writes Havell, "has there come together that true symphony of the three arts—painting, sculpture, and architectonic design—creating the most perfect architecture, which are so beautifully harmonized at Ajanta."

These precious remains attracted the notice of European artists soon after their discovery. Major Gill prepared some copies in 1857 but they were destroyed in the fire which broke out in the Crystal Palace in 1866. The pupils of the Bombay School of Art produced under the guidance of Dr. John Griffiths what Havell described as "uninspired copies."

But these efforts only produced inadequate reproductions and gave no indication of the technical skill and artistic beauty of the originals. The fact is the frescoes suffered both from neglect and earlier attempts at restoration. For long Ajanta had remained the home of bats, pigeons and bees. One of the chief concerns of the Government of the Nizam has been the preservation of the wall paintings which adorn the chaityas and viharas and the repair of their structure. Since 1920 the Department of Archaeology has done a great deal towards the preservation and reproduction of the famous frescoes. The Government engaged Professor Lorenzo Cecconi and Count Orsini to take appropriate measures for the repair of the damage done, and in collaboration with Indian experts they cleaned away the dirt and varnish from the frescoes. The edges of broken plaster have been cemented, and every possible care is now being taken by the Department of Archaeology to preserve what is left of those unique monuments. The erection of masonry pillars where necessary to support the weight of the roof of the monasteries and the construction of several parapet walls have ensured the preservation of these precious monuments. With a view to facilitating access to the excavations, a bridge over the river Waghora has been constructed.

According to some European art critics, the frescoes show a mastery "not equalled in Europe until the time of Giotto." "This technique of the original work

is so sure and so perfect that none of us were good enough executants to repeat it," writes Lady Herringham, who spent a number of years copying them.

Sixteen out of twenty-nine excavations contain wall paintings. These frescoes were painted at long intervals and yet they reveal a unity of conception, detail and design. The period of the development of these exquisite paintings extends from the second century B.C. to the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. Dr Yazdani says that "the people of the Deccan, independent of any influence from the north, were conversant with the art of painting in the early centuries of the first millennium B.C." An inscription from the chaitya number ten furnishes confirmation of his conclusion.

The technique employed was to spread upon the high rough surface of the rock a layer of clay mixed with cow-dung and rice-husks. In some instances pounded brick mixed with fibre was resorted to and the mixture was used as a plaster. Over this plaster, a coating of white lime-plaster was carefully spread and kept moist while colour was applied. The outline of the designs was drawn in red and the local colour was then put in. The surface of the frescoes was burnished.

The colours used in the Ajanta frescoes were chiefly obtained from local pigments, vegetable and mineral. Except in the case of blue, the materials found in the soil of the neighbouring hills provided what was needed. Yellow ochre, for example, was prepared from the yellow earth which is abundant in the Deccan. Varieties of red ochre could be obtained from burnt bricks. The source of the green colour was terre-verte, a kind of green rock which is found in the vicinity of the Ajanta hills. Oxide of copper or verdigris was probably another source of the green pigment used by the artists.*

Artistically the Ajanta frescoes are of unequal merit and we do not know who painted them. Coomaraswamy's view on this question may be of interest. He writes: "The possibility of monkish workmanship is not absolutely excluded, but it is far more probable that painters permanently attached to the foundation were employed, or that a guild of painters or chitrakara-sreni was called in, as in secular practice, the wall surface being divided into equal parts, and a share allotted to each painter. The custom of allotting equal shares to the several painters might possibly facilitate the recognition of different hands at Ajanta ; but on the other hand, we have the case of an old painter who could not do as much as was expected of him. In many cases we can visualize a party of expert painters at work, and with them a sprinkling of pupils acting as assistants. The wall surface has already been prepared (parikarma) by the application of clay and plaster, and primed (dhavalita). Dry pigments have been prepared in advance ; now they are mixed in coconut-shell cups with water. The painter first of all draws in outline, either with the hard style (lekhani) or with the brush (vartika), and then applies a second

* The Ruler of Aundh writes: "The Indian painters of the old school used to prepare this copper oxide by keeping sour butter-milk in a copper pot. Bandoba Chitari, who was an artist at the Durbar of our late father used to prepare this green colour thus." *Ajanta*, 1932.

6472

wash, the outline showing faintly through. Then taking other brushes—there are several of different sizes for each colour—he fills in the colour, making the picture bloom (unmil), the figures being at least partly completed before the background is coloured. When the essential colouring has been done, plastic relief is indicated by shading (vartana) and wiping out of high lights, and final outlines complete the work."*

The central theme of these frescoes in Ajanta is taken from the *Jatakas* or birth-story of the Buddha. Just as in the West we find the subjects with which the sculptures and paintings in the Middle Ages dealt were mainly connected with the Bible scenes, Buddhist art in India was much devoted to scenes of the Buddha legend. But as long as the influence of Hinayana Buddhism prevailed, there was no attempt to adorn the chaityas and viharas with paintings. The austere ideal of that cult placed a ban on art. In the *Vissuddhi Magga*, we find an explanation of the psychological attitude of early Buddhist aesthetics. It says : "Living beings, on account of their love and devotion to the sensations excited by forms and the objects of sense, give high honour to painters, musicians, perfumers, cooks and elixir-preserving physicians, and other like persons who furnish us with the objects of sense." Accordingly the monks of the Buddhist Sangha were forbidden to paint pictures on the walls of the monasteries and to decorate stupas even with the symbols of flowers and creepers.

With the rise of the Mahayana Buddhism an attempt was made to reconcile the oldest and more puritanical creed with life and culture, and this movement gave a powerful impetus to the embellishment of places of worship both with sculptures and paintings. The Ajanta frescoes are a striking commentary on the revolutionary changes wrought by Mahayana Buddhism. The deification of the Buddha permitted the introduction of his image into art and gave the artist an opportunity for its representation both in sculpture and in painting of colossal proportions.

The principal paintings are in excavations numbers one, two, sixteen, seventeen and nineteen. Flat ceilings, supported on massive columns about fourteen feet high, are richly decorated with floral designs, birds and animals. In the centre of these are the frescoes ; one is at once struck with the animation of the scenes they depict, and the extraordinary display of the technical power of the artists.

"On the hundred walls and pillars of these rock-carved temples," writes Sir William Rothenstein, "a vast drama moves before our eyes: a drama played by princes and sages and heroes, men and women of every condition, against a marvellously varied scene, among forests and gardens, in courts and cities, on wide plains, and in deep jungles, while above the messengers of heaven move swiftly across the sky. From all these emanates a great joy in the surpassing radiance of the face of the world and in the physical nobility of men and women, in the strength and grace of animals and the loveliness and purity of birds and flowers."†

* Ananda K. Coomaraswamy: "The Painter's Art in Ancient India," Jour. Ind. Soc. Ori. Art., Vol. I, 1933.

† Sir William Rothenstein: *Ajanta Frescoes.*

Apart from the illustrations of the *Jatakas* or birth-legends of the Buddha, the paintings depict the glory of his spiritual achievement. The frescoes incidentally throw a flood of light upon contemporary domestic life. Some of the frescoes illustrate historical episodes and legendary tales. But, as Fergusson observed, "the copies hitherto made are often only parts of a whole story, while large portions have been destroyed ; and this must be borne in mind by those who use them in attempting to read their contents."

The intercourse between south India and Persia in the first part of the seventh century A.D. is attested by one of the paintings in the ceiling of vihara number one. It portrays Khusru II and his consort Shirin, and Pulakesin II receiving a Persian embassy. Tabari, the Persian historian, puts the following statement in the mouth of Khusru in his account of the dispute between Khusru II and his son. "Two years ago, Pulakesi, King of India, sent to us, in the thirty-sixth year of our reign, ambassadors carrying a letter imparting to us various news, and presents for us, for you and our other sons. He also wrote a letter to each of you. To you he presented—do you not remember it—an elephant, a sword, a white falcon and a piece of gold brocade. When we looked at the presents and at the letters, we remarked that yours bore the mark 'private' on the cover in the Indian language. Then we ordered that the presents should be delivered to each of you, but we kept back your letter, on account of the remark written on the outside. We then sent for an Indian scribe, had the seal broken, and the letter read. The contents were: 'Rejoice and be of good cheer, for on the day Dai ba Adhar, of the thirty-eighth year of the reign of Chosroes, thou wilt be crowned king and become ruler of the whole empire. Signed Pulakesi.' But we closed this letter with our seal, and gave it into the keeping of our consort Shirin."*

In the same vihara, we see a painting of Prince Mahajanaka's coronation. It is interesting to note that the royal dignity conferred upon him is symbolized by the two white rams which flank his throne. According to the Hindu ritualistic tradition, the goat is the sacrificial animal. It is therefore used in the ceremony (rajasuya) which confers upon the king royal power over his kingdom. The umbrella is another symbol of sovereignty, signifying the king's power to shelter his kingdom beneath it.

In vihara number one, we find the story of the conversion of Buddha's half-brother Nanda. The picture of the "Dying Princess" is that of his bride bewailing the separation from her husband. This story is related in a Sanskrit poem by Asvaghosha and it has been frequently depicted by the Buddhist artists. According to Dr. Griffiths, this painting cannot be surpassed in the history of art for its pathos and sentiment. He wrote: "The Florentines could have put better drawing, and the Venetians better colour, but neither could have thrown greater expression into it."

* G. Yazdani: *Ajanta*, pp. 46-51. It should be noted that Professor Foucher thinks that no historical scenes were represented anywhere in Ajanta frescoes. Jour. Hyder. Arch. Soc. 1919-20, pp. 99-100. According to Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Tabari's passage relates to Harsavardhana. Jour. Ind. His Vol. IV, pp. 29

The dying woman, with drooping head, half-closed eyes and languid limbs, reclines on bed. . . . she is tenderly supported by a female attendant ; while another, with eager gaze is looking into her face, and holds the sick woman's arm as if in the act of feeling her pulse. The expression on her face is one of deep anxiety as she seems to realize how soon life will be extinct in the one she loves. Another female behind is in attendance with a pankha ; while two men on the left are looking on with the expression of profound grief depicted on their faces. Below are seated on the floor other relations, who appear to have given up all hope, and to have begun their days of mourning ; for one woman has buried her face and apparently is weeping bitterly."*

The Department of Archaeology has given much attention to the preservation of the frescoes on the ceiling and walls of vihara seventeen. Here we see some of the masterpieces of Buddhist art. In this vihara we see the striking illustration of the tale of Prince Simhala, the mythical ancestor of the Singhalese of Ceylon. Court scenes, hunting scenes, dancing women, musicians; processions of elephants and people, profuse embellishment of artistic devices—the whole effect of all these is an exuberant riot of life. In the paintings of viharas sixteen and seventeen, we recognize a vital change in the spirit of Buddhist art.

Details of the ethnology, history and social life of the time are vividly depicted in these paintings. Scenes of everyday life, such as preparing food, carrying water, marketing, men and women singing, dancing, playing on musical instruments, various and distinctive dresses of nobles, monks, mendicants, priests, warriors—all these give an idea of the age when the influence of Mahayana Buddhism was at its height. And the way in which these pictorial representations have been executed suggests that the artists were men of keen observation and retentive memory.

IV

Ellora is about sixteen miles from Deogiri (now Aurangabad), the old capital of the Yadava kings. The series of rock-cut monasteries were excavated in the scarp of a plateau, the scarp running for about a mile and a quarter. Some twelve of these temples are of Buddhist origin and about sixteen are Brahmanical. "No place is more suitable than Ellora," writes a European critic, "for a comparison between the solemn art of Buddhism and the Brahmanic one which has something dramatic and passionate about it. There is also a group of Jain shrines in which the figures of Mahavira† and Parsvanath add to the interest of Ellora as a meeting-ground of Brahminism, Buddhism and Jainism. Most important shrines at Ellora date from a period when complete toleration was observed by Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. "All the Ajanta caves belong to one religion, and, beginning at a very much earlier period than anything found at Ellora, carry on the history of the

* See *Gazetteer of Aurangabad*, 1884.

† Vardhamana Mahavira was the founder of Jainism. He was born in 599 B. C. and belonged to the royal family of Vaisali.

Kailasa Temple, Ellora

Viswakarma Cave, Ellora. Cave X

Buddhist religion and architecture for nearly a thousand years ; and though the series at Ellora commenced nearly at the time when the excavations at Ajanta ceased, immense interest is added by the introduction of temples belonging to the Hindu and Jain religions, affording a varied picture of the mythology of India during the period of its greatest vigour, such as is nowhere else to be found."*

The Buddhist group is situated in the south horn, the Jain group is in the north horn and the Brahmanical group is between them.

Jainism rose to importance about 1000 A.D. and the great age of Jain architecture was between 1000 A.D. and 1300 A.D. It should be noted that Jain temples were largely built by private patrons.

The series of Buddhist rock-hewn edifices were excavated within the period from A.D. 350 to A.D. 700 and they belonged to the period of the Mahayana Buddhism. Beginning at the south end of the series the first one is a vihara fifty-two feet square with eight cells. It is probably the oldest excavation at Ellora. The interesting feature in the second of the group is the profusion of sculptured images of the Buddha in various postures. It is probably a chaitya. It measures forty-eight feet square, exclusive of the lateral galleries on each side. These galleries contain images of the Buddha seated on a lotus-throne (*padma-asana*) in the posture of teaching (*dharmachakra-mudra*). The roof is supported by twelve massive columns arranged in a square, and they have elegant cushion capitals and high square bases. The shrine contains a colossal Buddha image seated on a lion-throne (*simhasana*), and several images of dwarapalas, bodhisattvas and vidyadharas. There is one of Padmapani or Avalokitesvara holding a rosary in the right hand and a lotus stalk in the left.

The fifth is a spacious vihara measuring about a hundred and seventeen feet deep and over fifty-eight feet wide, exclusive of two large side recesses. The roof is supported by twenty-four pillars which have cushion capitals. Judging from the interior arrangement, it seems that this vihara was probably used as a guest house (dharmasala) or a monastic school (vidyalaya). The ante-chamber in the front of the sixth has a number of interesting sculptures. One female figure appears to represent Saraswati, the Hindu Goddess of Learning.

We now come to the tenth, the only proper chaitya at Ellora. It is called the Viswakarma ; that is, the shrine dedicated to the patron saint of the craftsman. Its façade is highly ornamental and consists of a porch surmounted by a gallery leading to the minstrel gallery within the chapel. The arched roof is carved in imitation of the timber style, and the deep frieze above the pillars is filled with a variety of figures. The sculptures in the triforium and in the galleries show that they belong to the late Mahayana period. A colossal image of the Buddha is carved in front of the stupa. It is interesting to note here that in this shrine of the artisans the image of seated Buddha has his feet *down* and that there are a great number of figures of the Buddha represented as Avalokitesvara—rescuer from

* Report of Archaeological Survey of Western India, Vol. V.

fear. Another feature of the chaitya is that unlike the earlier excavations, the horse-shoe window is divided into three portions by pillars with an attic window over the central opening.

Perhaps, the most impressive vihara is a three-storeyed structure called the Tin Thal. The excavation of this vihara shows remarkable ingenuity as each storey is of considerable size and designed with great accuracy.

It has a large open court in front. This commodious vihara is entered through a rock-hewn gateway, which opens on to a quadrangle. The façade of the excavation rises in three equal tiers, and each storey is indicated by a porch supported by eight square piers. The ground floor, a hundred and twelve feet long and forty-three feet deep, is divided transversely into three aisles by means of three rows of pillars of eight each. The first storey comprises one large hall, a hundred and twelve feet long and seventy-two feet deep and about twelve feet high. This is also divided into five transverse aisles by five rows of pillars of eight each. Here is an image of the Buddha, "the head encircled by a halo, the hands folded, sunk in profound meditation, with an expression of spiritual elevation and deep inner vision." The Tin Thal excels in profusion of ornamentation and also contains numerous Bodhisattva images. The exterior of this striking vihara is plain. But, to quote Percy Brown, "as a contrast to this austere character of the façade, on entering the monastery it will be found that the interior of each hall is enriched with considerable sculpture, and interest in the production as a whole revives when it is found that each storey is differently treated and each one is of no little aesthetic and architectural merit."*

The other three-storeyed vihara is misnamed Do Thal or two storeys, as one storey was discovered only recently. It is not as commodious as the Tin Thal, but its general plan is based upon similar lines. The technical aspect of rock-hewn architecture reaches its climax in these two three-storeyed viharas at Ellora of the seventh century.

The Brahmanical group extends along the west face of the hill for about half a mile, and consists of sixteen excavations. Of these, the temple of the Das Avatar is of considerable interest. It is a two-storeyed structure consisting of a large courtyard surrounded by small shrines and quarters for the priests. The ground floor has a compartment ninety-seven feet wide by fifty feet deep. A staircase leads to a fine rectangular hall, a hundred and five feet by ninety-five feet, having fifty-four pillars to support its flat roof. These pillars are arranged in six rows of nine each, but only the two pillars in front of the vestibule are elaborately carved. In large sunk panels spaced out between the pilasters around the walls, there are some interesting reliefs depicting episodes from Hindu mythology. While these sculptures show great delicacy of treatment and vigour of action, we begin to see signs of the divorce of figure sculpture from the idealistic conception of Buddhist art. They are probably more dramatic and graceful than noble or inspiring.

* Percy Brown: *Indian Architecture*, 1940.

There is a detached shrine in the centre courtyard near the entrance. Here we see a Nandi image or the bull of Siva carved out of rock. The Das Avatar has an inscription which suggests that it was probably completed during the reign of Dantidurga Rashtrakuta who conquered the Chalukyans about the middle of the eighth century.

The Dumar Lena is another imposing temple in which the shrine is not only isolated but contained within a group of halls arranged on a cruciform plan. Its exterior consists of the three detached entrances, all of which are of striking design. Each is a wide pillared opening approached by a flight of steps with the statue of a lion on either side. The arrangement of the pillars receding into the diminishing light of the interior is impressive and fits naturally into the architectural scheme of the excavation. The main hall is a hundred and fifty feet long and fifty feet wide, and it is divided into a nave and aisles by a colonnade of five pillars on each side. The entire excavation including the shrine is a hundred and fifty feet wide, a hundred and fifty feet deep, and about eighteen feet high. The arrangement of the halls, that is, the transverse system, is not dissimilar in principle to that of a Gothic cathedral.

We now come to the Kailasa Temple, one of the most precious treasures of the State of Hyderabad. As its name denotes, the temple is designed to be a replica of Siva's celestial abode. It had, therefore, to be differently built from all other temples on earth. It is indeed the finest and grandest monolithic excavation in the world, and an outstanding achievement of Indian architects and sculptors. It stands in the centre of a vast court supported by four rows of pilasters and hewn and carved with colossal elephants and other animals among them giving this massive monolith an effect of "being suspended in mid-air."

As an example of rock-hewn architecture it is unrivalled because here its creators broke away from all past conventions of excavating underground chaityas and viharas, and undertook to reproduce a structural edifice carved out of the living rock. As Roger Fry puts it, "The Indian artist had an extraordinarily developed plastic sense. No other people has ever dreamed of sculpting such great temples out of the solid rock as he has. Indeed, Indian architecture proceeds, not as ours, according to the principles of construction ; it is rather conceived as an object cut out of a solid material as an ivory figure might be."*

We cannot, however, estimate the artistic value of this stupendous work of art merely by its technique or by the manner in which it has been executed. That the entire edifice is an expression of religious emotion is obvious to those who understand the inner meaning of this sculpturesque sanctuary. Truly has it been remarked:

"Standing within its precincts and surrounded by its grey and hoary pavilions, one seems to be looking through into another world, not a world of time and space, but one of intense spiritual devotion expressed by such an amazing artistic creation

* Roger Fry: *The Arts of Painting and Sculpture.*

hewn out of the earth itself. Gradually one becomes conscious of the remarkable imagination which conceived it, the unstinted labour which enabled it to be carried out (the work of a hundred years), and, finally, the sculpture with which it is adorned; this plastic decoration is its crowning glory, something more than a record of artistic form, it is a great spiritual achievement, every portion being a rich statement glowing with meaning. The Kailasa is an illustration of one of those rare occasions when men's minds, hearts, and hands work in unison towards the consummation of a supreme ideal. It was under such conditions of religious and cultural stability that this grand monolithic representation of Siva's Paradise was produced."*

The Kailasa was executed under the patronage of the Rashtrakuta king Krishna I (757-783 A.D.). A copperplate grant thus describes the achievement:

"Krishnaraja caused to be constructed a temple of a wonderful form on the mountain of Elapura (i.e. Ellora). When the gods, moving in the aerial cars, saw it, they were struck with wonder and constantly thought much over the matter, saying to themselves: 'This temple of Siva is self-existent, for such beauty is not to be found in a work of art.' Even the architect who constructed it was struck with wonder, saying, when his heart misgave him as regards making another similar attempt, 'Wonderful! I do not know how it was that I could construct it.' "†

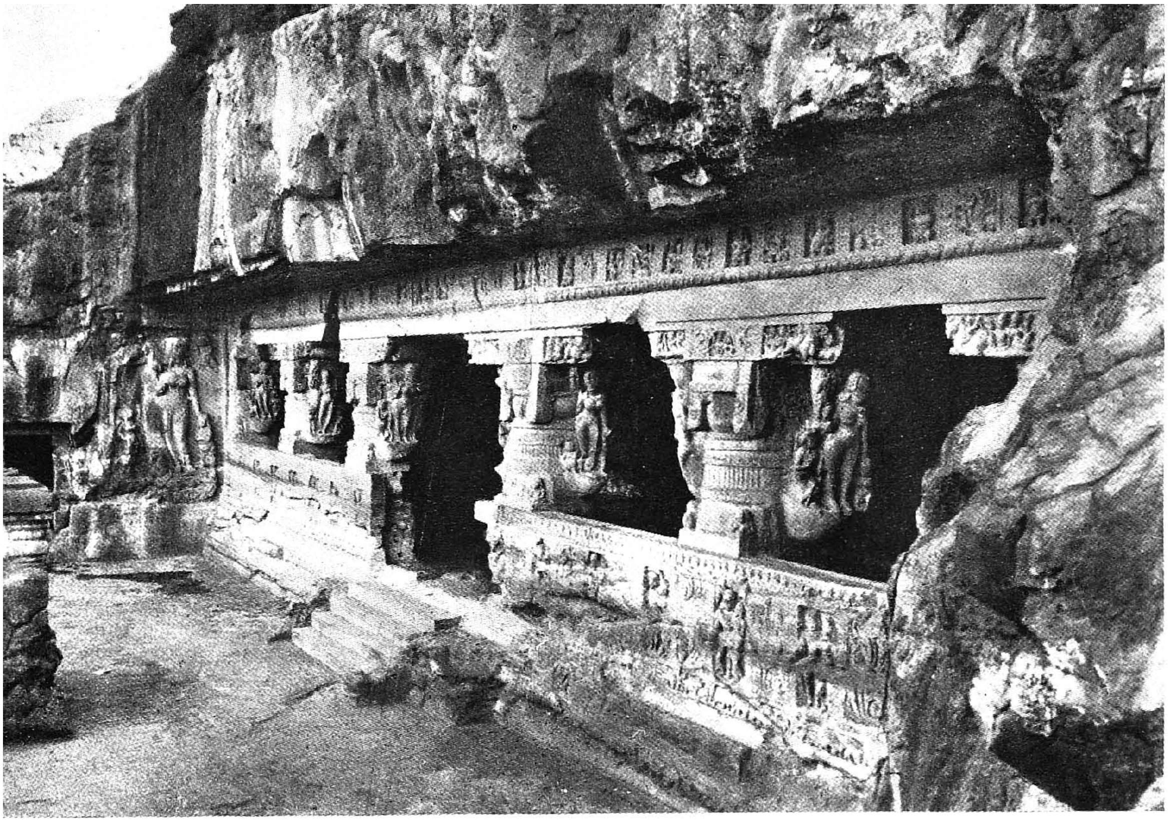
Rock-hewn temples are usually excavated horizontally ; but the architects of the Kailasa worked from above downwards into the depths until they struck one gigantic solid rock. It was this monolith that has been shaped into a temple. The hill-side was cut down vertically to the level of the base of the hill, and it is computed that some three million cubic feet of rock had to be chiselled out. The pit thus formed is two hundred and seventy-six feet long, a hundred and fifty-four feet wide and a hundred and seven feet deep, leaving in the centre a huge solid monolith. Then began the process of rough-hewing the irregular mass into shape, and as the work progressed downwards, the sculptors carried on their operation simultaneously in order to avoid any need for scaffolding.

The main temple, dedicated to Siva, occupies a parallelogram approximately a hundred and fifty feet by a hundred feet, with side projections, like transepts, to support corresponding projecting features above. The temple proper stands on the plinth twenty-five feet high and there is an impressive frieze of boldly carved elephants and lions. The temple is approached by flights of steps leading to a pillared portico on its western side. It is a double-storeyed temple with chapels and monastic halls hewn out of the rock on three sides of the quarry. The three buildings and the outer gateway are connected by an overhead bridge. The entrance to the temple faces the setting sun, the common design of a Siva temple.

Over the temple rises the tower in three tiers, with its prominently projecting gable-front, and surmounted by a cupola. The total height of the entire temple is about ninety-five feet. The interior consists of a well-proportioned pillared hall

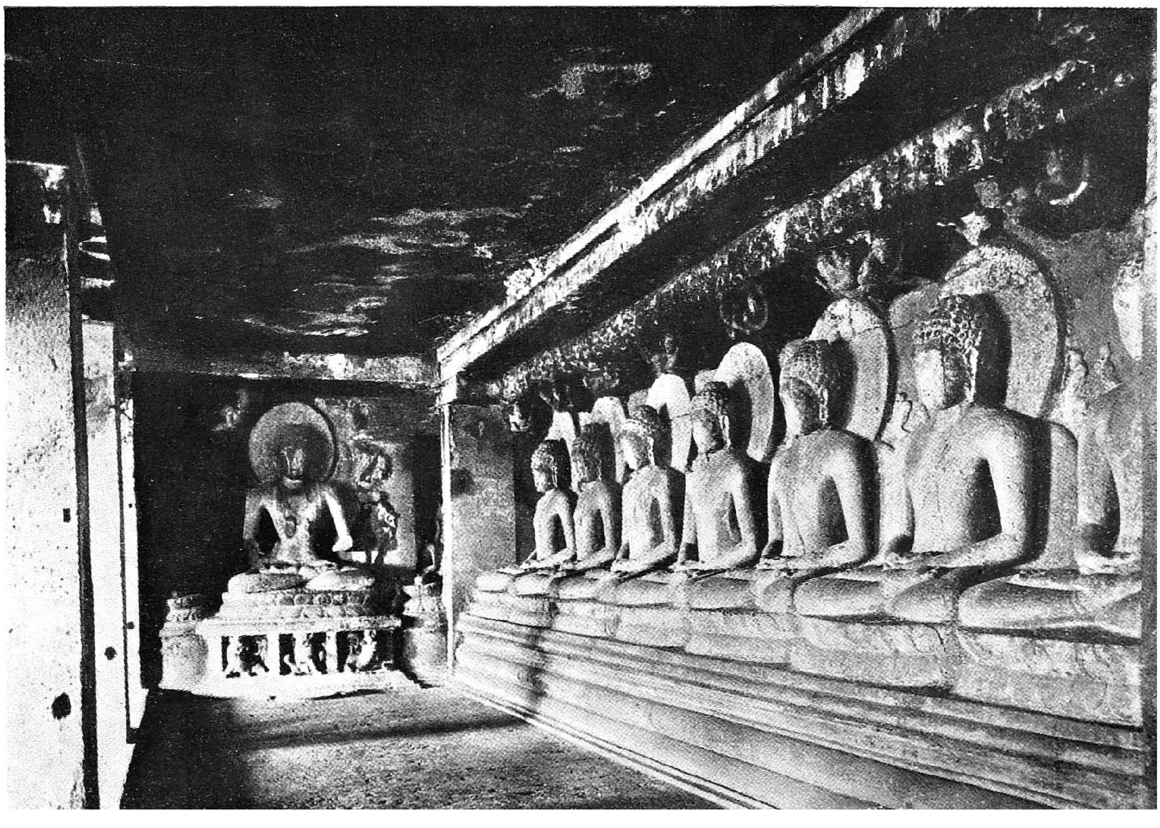
* Percy Brown: *Indian Architecture,* 1940.

† Quoted by Professor H. G. Rawlinson in *India : a Short Cultural History* from the original of *Epigraphia Indica.*

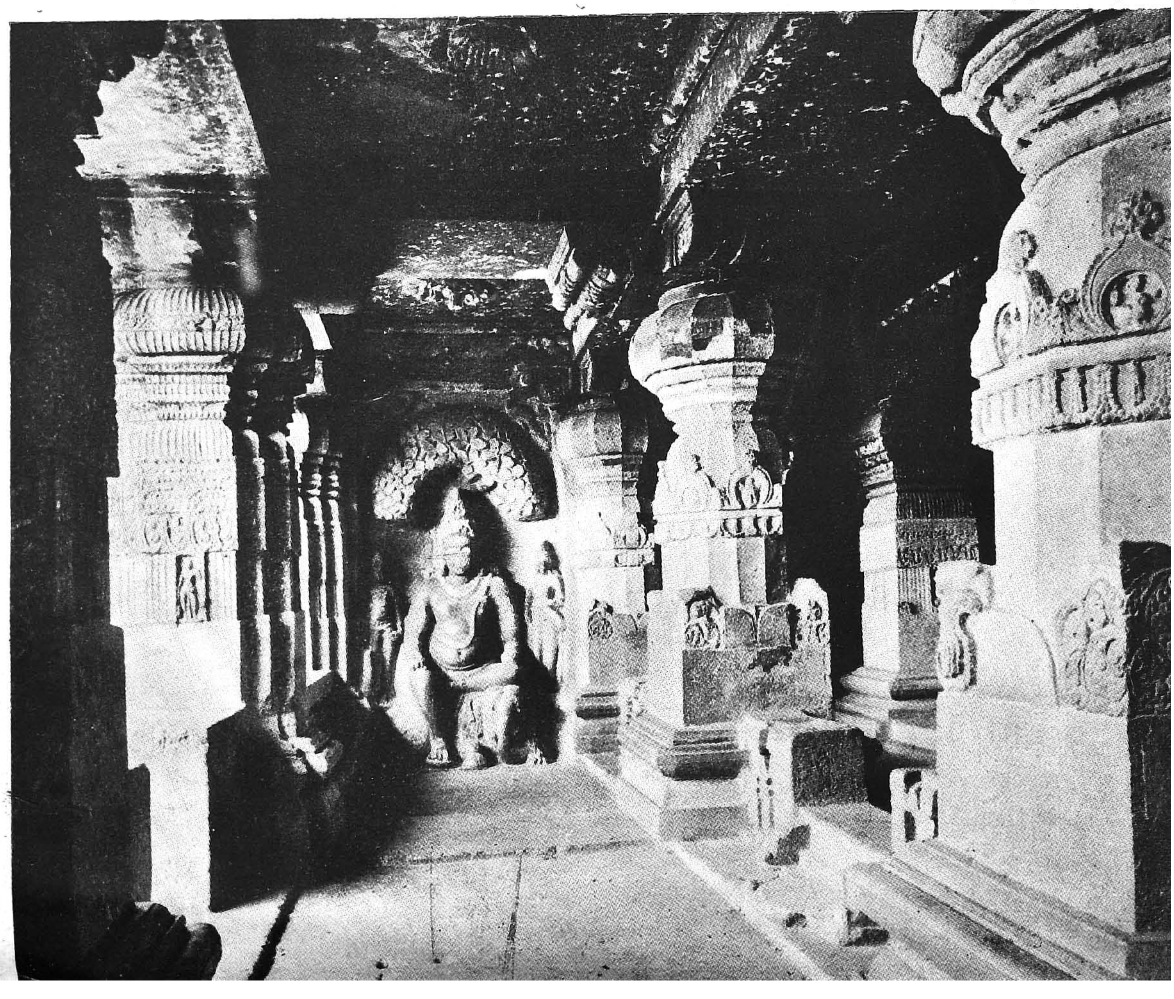


Rameswara Cave, Ellora. Cave XXI

Tin Thal, Ellora. Cave XII



Sita-ki-Nahani (Bath), Ellora. Cave XXIX



Indra Sabha, Ellora. Cave XXIII

measuring seventy feet by sixty-two feet and the hall has sixteen square piers in groups of four in each quarter. The arrangement of the piers in this fashion produces a cruciform central aisle. Friezes which adorn the walls represent scenes from the Ramayana and are executed with superb skill.

There is a pavilion twenty feet square in the front of which we see the bull of Siva, the Nandi. This Nandi shrine is raised to the height of fifty feet in order to make it level with the rest of the temple to which it is connected by a bridge.

The two pillars, one on each side of the Nandi shrine, are called *dhwaja-stambhas* or stone flagstaffs. They rise about fifty-one feet high and are gracefully proportioned ; each contains symbolic carvings of the Saiva cult and the shape of each has been so fashioned out of the rock that these pillars are in themselves finished works of art. And their place in the whole composition of the Kailasa is as appropriate as that of the obelisk in the Egyptian temple.

The final group of the excavated shrines at Ellora belongs to the Jains, and they are situated at the northern spur of the hill about a mile and a half from the Kailasa. Of these five excavations the two shrines are of interest. The Indra Sabha or the Assembly Hall of Indra, a two-storeyed shrine cut into the rock to a depth of over a hundred feet, is approached through a rock-hewn doorway which opens on to a square courtyard in the centre of which we see a monolithic structure somewhat in the form of a miniature Dravidian temple. To the right of the entrance is an imposing statue of an elephant balanced on the opposite side by a monolithic pillar or *dhwajastambha* thirty feet high. The upper storey of the Indra Sabha is borne on twelve profusely sculptured pillars. A broad horizontal surface divides the lower from the upper storey. Both these entablatures are elaborately carved. On the upper entablature we see a number of images of the twenty-four Tirthankars or Jain saints.

The ceiling over the altar in the main hall is designed to represent a large lotus giving an effect of considerable beauty. At each end of the hall is a shrine containing a large figure of Mahavira. The statue of Indra in the loggia with an elephant at its feet is an exquisite piece of sculpture. Both in figure sculpture and in decorative motif, the artists have indeed produced works of considerable distinction. "No other temple at Ellora," writes Percy Brown, "is so complete in its arrangements or so finished in its workmanship as the upper storey of the Indra Sabha ; all the large sunk panels between pilasters on every wall being filled with figure subjects, while the pillars, admirably spaced, and on occasion joined by dwarf walls, are moulded, fluted, and faceted, as in no other instance."*

Almost adjoining the Indra Sabha is the other notable example of Jain excavations at Ellora. This is the Jagannath Sabha or the Assembly Hall of the Lord of the Universe. Its general plan is similar to that of the Indra Sabha but is smaller in size. The shrine is entered through a small ante-chamber with a well-proportioned gate or toran over the entrance. Within the shrine is a seated Mahavira on the

* Percy Brown: *Indian Architecture,* 1940.

throne. The walls are recessed for figure sculpture, and the pillars are richly carved in the style in which the Jain artist excels.

With the excavated shrines and monasteries of the Jains at Ellora, we arrive at the final phase of rock-hewn architecture in India. All this time structural building had been developing and patrons of religious architecture favoured the masonry system of construction.

CHAPTER FOUR

MUSLIM MONUMENTS

The monuments left by the early Muslim rulers of the Deccan are numerous and provide a shining example of their genius for architecture. The imposing relics of the Bahmani dynasty at Gulbarga, the exquisite Chand Minar at Dualatabad, the tomb of Sultan Ahmad Shah at Bidar, the unique Madrasah built by Muhammad Gawan, the Mecca Masjid, the Char Minar and the noble tombs of the Kutb Shahi Sultans of Golconda rank among the outstanding edifices of India.

It should be noted that the Muslims who conquered India were familiar with the art of building. The Muslim kings recognized the skill of Indian builders and craftsmen, and freely adopted those features of Hindu architecture which served to enrich the aesthetic qualities of their own creations. "In the fusion of the two styles which followed", writes Sir John Marshall, "Muhammadan architecture absorbed or inherited manifold ideas and concepts from Hindu—so many, indeed, that there is hardly a form or motif or Indian architecture which in some guise or other did not find its way into the buildings of the conquerors."*

Indo-Muslim architecture† is largely the result of an ingenious adaptation of central Asian features. The so-called Saracenic style exhibits local difference in treatment and detail dependent on the availability of suitable building material and of builders and artisans. As Fergusson has pointed out, "The Saracenic architects showed in India the same pliancy in adopting the styles of the various people among whom they had settled." For example, the famous Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem was constructed of brick plastered externally and internally ; but in India the abundance of sandstone and marble made the use of brick unnecessary. Here the domes were built of stone generally "in projecting horizontal courses, thus minimizing oblique pressure on the supporting walls." But while modifying their architectural forms to suit local conditions, the Muslim rulers took care to invest their edifices with a peculiar character which made them different from those in any other style. The dome, the loftily graceful minars and minarets, the pointed arch, the half-domed double portal and delicate interior decoration are some of the distinctive features of Muslim architecture in India.

In Muslim architecture the portal, with its supporting wings and crowning

* Cambridge History of India Vol. II, p. 571.

†While the term "Saracenic" is usually applied to Muslim architecture, the term "Indo-Muslim" is, perhaps, preferable to express the forms and conceptions of Muslim architecture in India.

features, rises usually to a greater height than the main building with the exception of the dome. Fergusson says:

"The Gothic architects attempted something of this sort by making the outer openings of their doors considerably larger than the inner ; in other words, by splaying widely the jambs of the portals. By this means, in some of the French cathedrals, the appearance of a very large portal is obtained with only the requisite and convenient size of opening. But in this they were far surpassed by the architects of the East, whose lofty and deeply recessed portals are unrivalled for grandeur and magnificence."

To the Muslim builders, masjids were of great architectural importance both internally and externally. The prohibition of the use of human and animal forms in decoration and sculpture led to the intricate geometrical surface decoration known as "arabesque" which is a characteristic feature of Muslim art. The coolness of these places of worship was assured by wide-spreading roof-eaves and by lattice windows and pierced screens.

The pointed arch (mihrab) is another feature of Muslim architecture. It is symbolic of the Islamic faith. The arch is either formed of two segments of a circle or as a four-centred arch. In some cases the arches are trefoil-cusped or with a much larger number of cusps. The cusped arch, however, is not introduced as a constructive, but as a decorative feature. We should also note the cupolas and slender minarets which contribute to the delicacy and elegance of Indo-Muslim architecture.

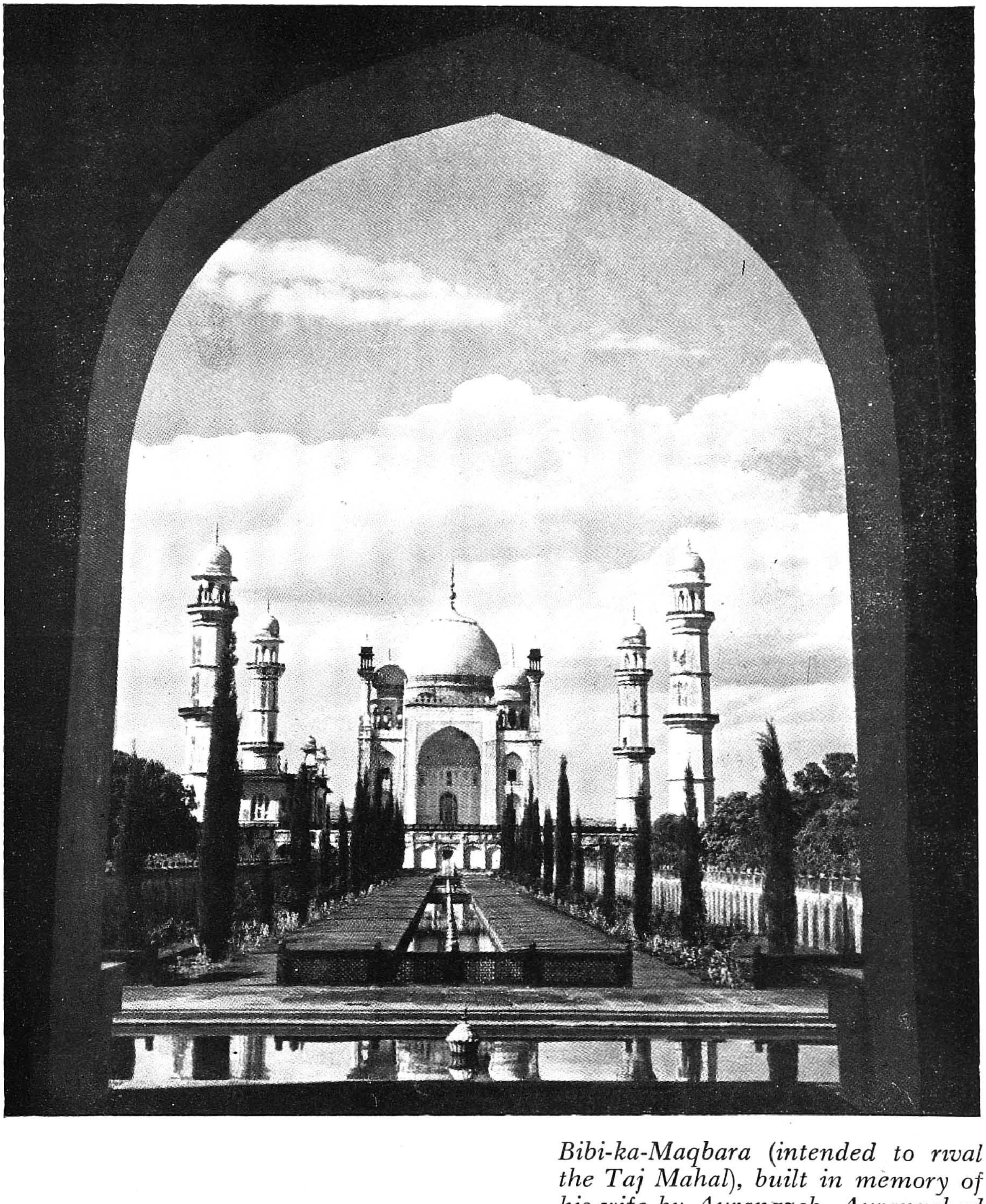
The Adil Shahi sultans developed in Bijapur a special style of architecture with some remarkable results. Here the palaces, tombs and mosques preserve the Muslim ideal of utter simplicity without the sacrifice of aesthetic qualities. The famous Jama Masjid or congregational mosque at Gulbarga, the first seat of the Bahmani kingdom, is an impressive edifice. Here we note two features of this mosque: one is the design of broad squat arches of the cloisters ; and the other is the unique treatment of the spacious courtyard which is covered in by thirty-three small domes carried on arched bays. The design of a broad arch with low imposts has since become familiar adjuncts of Muslim architecture in the Deccan.

There are as many as twelve tombs of the Bahmani sultans illustrating the wealth and prodigality of the rulers of the kingdom. The aspirations of the builders are well expressed in the lovely verse inscribed in a Muslim edifice at Mandu, a city in the State of Dhar.

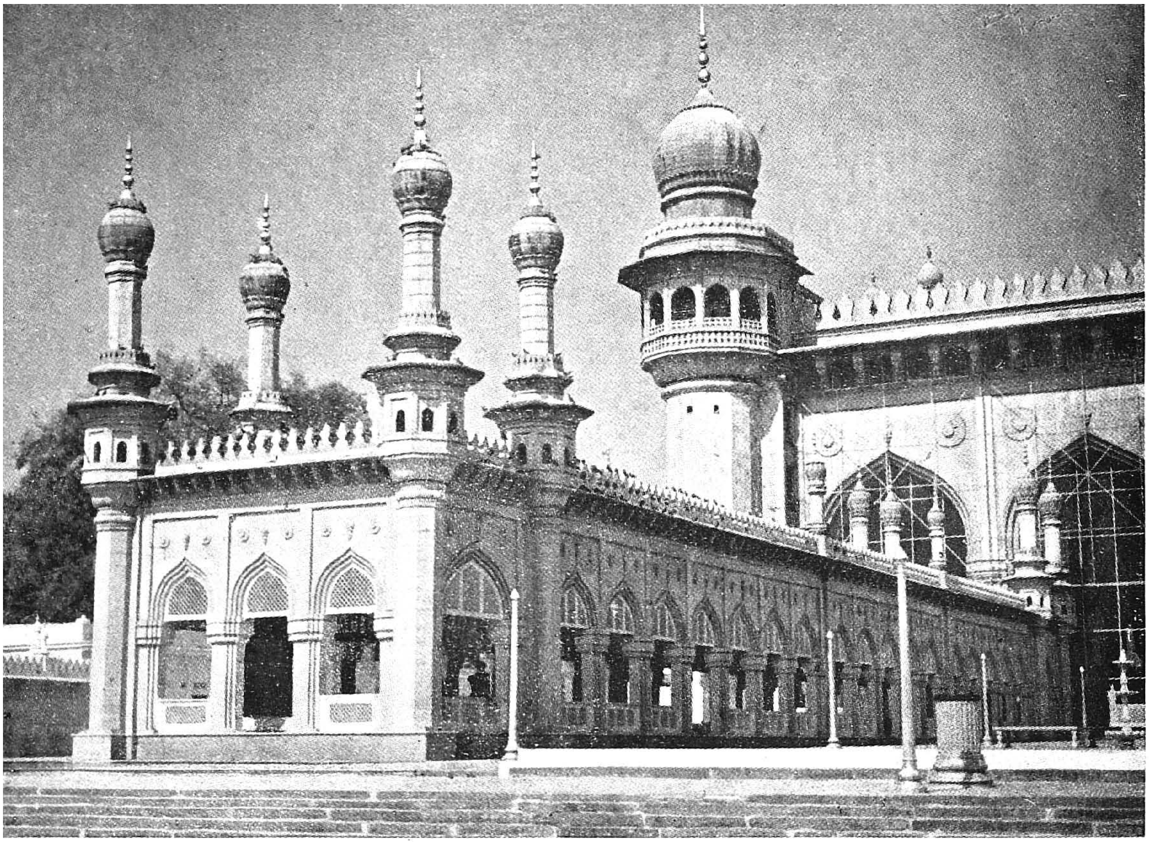
"The whole of life well spent we deem
In building thus, if o'er us gleam
Some faintest hope that soul of grace
Shall find repose within this place."*

It should be noted that to the closing years of the fourteenth century the Bahmani sultans followed the Tughlaq style of Delhi. The main features of the

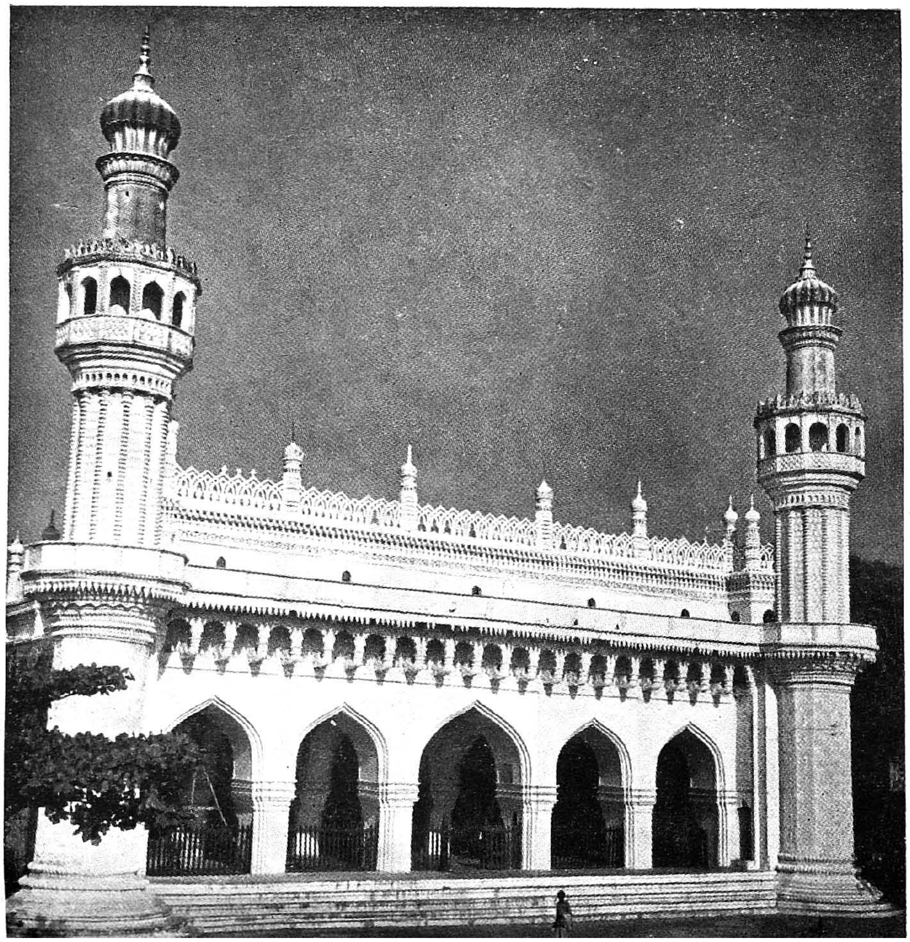
* G. Yazdani: *Mandu.*



Bibi-ka-Maqbara (intended to rival the Taj Mahal), built in memory of his wife by Aurangzeb, Aurangabad



Mecca Masjid, Hyderabad



Murshidabad Mosque, Hyderabad

style were buttressed walls, low dome, fluted turrets, tall but narrow doorways and a band of blue enamel tiles below the springers of the dome. But the tomb of Firoz Shah and his family bear witness to the influence of Hindu craftsmanship as well as to the growing fashion of emulating Persian ornamental designs.

The architecture of Gulbarga under the Nizam Shahi sultans has certain features which are not found in contemporary Adil Shahi or Barid Shahi or Kutb Shahi edifices. The following observations of Dr. Yazdani on the Nizam Shahi architecture are interesting:

"The masonry used in the Nizam Shahi buildings is generally of grey colour giving a sombre effect to the structures. There are no corridors or verandahs around the bases of the mausoleums while the exteriors of the buildings invariably have *Chhajjas* or drip stones. Further, the pattern of the *Jalis* and other carvings are of Hindu rather than Muslim styles. A mausoleum of this dynasty, called the tomb of *Zachcha* and *Bachcha,* has pillars at its corners, the style of which is unusual in the Deccan ; but it has a close affinity to the style of the pillar of the *Khilwat Khana* (Hall of Private Audience) of Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri."*

Architecturally the Langer-ki-Masjid at Gulbarga is of considerable interest ; for it has a vaulted arch-shaped roof with wooden ribs or groins resembling those which are found in rock-hewn chaityas at Ajanta. The relics of the early Bahmanis and Adil Shahis afford scope for the systematic study of the beginnings of Muslim architecture in the Deccan. The Muslim monuments are as rich "in secular majesty as in religious solemnity."

II

Having transferred the capital from Gulbarga to Bidar in 1426 the Bahmani sultans proceeded to adorn the city with magnificent edifices. The ancient town of Bidar was at one time a Hindu city. It is said to have been the scene of the adventures of King Nala and his wife Damayanti.

The majority of the edifices are now in ruins, but archaeological research has brought to light some characteristic features of the palaces, garden-houses, masjids, tombs and other public buildings. The sultans of the Barid dynasty left an imposing assembly of mausoleums but the most remarkable of all the edifices was the college (madrasah) built by the Prime Minister of the reigning Sultan Muhammad Shah III in 1472. The college, according to historians, was one of the most flourishing institutions of the time. The building which was probably designed by Persian architects, for the madrasah has a strong resemblance to the college of Ulugh Beg at Samarkand.

The builder of this madrasah, Khwaja Mahmud Gawan, was an eminent personality. He belonged to an ancient family of Persia and migrated to the Deccan. "His character," writes Taylor, "stands out broadly and grandly not only among

* Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology, 1934, Kern Institute, Leyden.

his contemporaries, but among all the ancient Muhammadans of India, as one unapproachably perfect and consistent. His noble and judicious reforms, his skill and bravery in war, his justice and public and private benevolence have, in the aggregate, no equals in the Muhammadan history of India."* The wealth he amassed by living like a fakir was devoted to this pious project.

But he was hated by the Deccani party whose leaders could not tolerate a foreigner holding the premier post in the kingdom, and they were determined to destroy him. They managed to obtain his private seal affixed to a blank paper on which they wrote a treasonable letter and placed it before the Sultan when he was drunk. The faithful aged minister was at once summoned to his presence and when he appeared the Sultan demanded to know the punishment due to a traitor. "Death by the sword," replied the minister. The Sultan then showed him the letter, and, having read it, the minister exclaimed, "By God, this is an obvious forgery! The seal is mine, but the writing is none of mine, and I know nothing of the matter." But his protestations of innocence were of no avail. The Sultan made no inquiry and did not even take the trouble to summon the messenger on whom the letter had been found, but ordered an African servant to put him to death. But Mahmud Gawan's treasurer challenged the Sultan to prove his minister's guilt, and when he discovered the deceit practised on him, the Sultan gave way to paroxysms of grief and remorse, until he died at the age of twenty-eight from the effects of excessive drinking, crying out in his last moments that Mahmud Gawan was slaying him!

After the capture of the city, the madrasah was used as a powder magazine and the greater part of the building was destroyed through an accidental explosion. The ruins, however, bear testimony to the magnificence and beauty of this superb edifice. The outline of its foundations measures about 205 feet by 180 feet. The building was three storeys high and had several rooms to serve as library, lecture halls and a mosque as well as living quarters for teachers and students, ranged about an open courtyard. The graceful minarets, one of which is still standing, must have been ornamented with enamelled tiles in a herring-bone pattern. The repair of this striking Muslim monument has been carried out successfully so as to restore it to some semblance of its original beauty. But, as Sir John Marshall observes, "with all its elegance of outline, its unimpeachable proportions, and refined details, there is little or no feeling in Mahmud Gawan's college for plastic form and mass, or for the values of contrasted light and shade. The architect has visualized his subject, as the architects of Eastern Persia habitually did, in two rather than in three dimensions, and has sought to achieve beauty by a glistening display of enamel, helped out by symmetry of outline and a nicely adjusted balance of parts. For sheer loveliness of colour the result could hardly be bettered ; but divest the building of its superficial ornament and little is left save a mathematically correct, and highly stylized fabric."†

* Colonel Meadows Taylor: *Manual of the History of India.*

† "The Monuments of Muslim India," Cam. His. Ind. Vol. III, Chap. XXIII.

The great mosque of Bidar is renowned for its simple grandeur and solemnity. It has nineteen arched entrances in front and eighty round piers inside which support the groin of the roof. In the middle, enclosing the *mihrabs* and a pulpit is an apartment "which is carried up as an octagon a storey above the roof of the mosque, and covered by a large dome." The entire roof was covered by some eighty-four small domes.

The tombs of the Bahmani sultans and their families are simple square chambers, crowned with battlements and corner turrets and roofed by a bulbous dome, single or double, according to the length of the edifice. The entire tomb stands on a low square plinth. There is a dignified simplicity about these royal tombs although they are all of a similar pattern. One of these edifices has a beautiful façade of blue tiles, and another is a painted tomb unique in India as it bears a Persian inscription in gold on a bright background. The largest of these tombs is that of Sultan Ahmad Shah, who, as we have seen, removed the capital from Gulbarga to Bidar in 1432. The interior of his tomb contains brilliantly coloured paintings in the Persian style, and inscriptions are worked out in letters of gold on a ground of deep blue or vermillion. An inscription in Persian on his tomb runs thus:

"Should ever my heart ache,
My remedy is this:
A cup of sparkling wine
And then I sip of bliss."

In another inscription it is stated that Shukrullah of Qazvin designed the mausoleum. It is said that this edifice "bears the same form of decoration and calligraphy inside the dome as we find on the tomb of Tamerlane."

Before taking leave of Bidar, we may read an extract from an account left by Athanasius Nikitin, a Russian-American merchant who visited the capital in 1470. "There were villages at every *cos*. The land was laid out in fields, and the ground was tilled. The roads were well guarded, and travelling was secure. Bidar was a noble land with great salubrity of climate, and the King had an army of 300,000 men well equipped." At all events, Bidar was a prosperous city and her prosperity was enshrined in the spectacular assemblage of magnificent edifices. Today Bidar, as Professor Rawlinson says, "stands in solitary grandeur, towering above the green, level plain, and in the musician's gallery an old blind drummer still salutes the rising and setting sun with his melancholy strains."

III

It has been mentioned that Bijapur was the capital of the Adil Shahi dynasty which rose after the fall of the Bahmani kingdom of Gulbarga in 1489. The Adil Shahi sultans had a great passion for architectural edifices of every variety and purpose. "By the end of the fifteenth century," writes Sir John Marshall, "the latent art of the Deccan was reasserting itself in increasing strength and when, in the

following century, the Adil Shahis set about their magnificent monuments at Bijapur and freely employed Indian artists and craftsmen on their construction, it was inevitable that Indian genius should rise superior to foreign influence and stamp itself more and more deeply on these creations."* The architectural style of these Bijapur monuments and their inspiration had considerable influence on the growth and development of the Indo-Muslim architecture of Hyderabad.

Bijapur stands on the site of an old Hindu town called Bichkhanhalli, and five other hamlets in its neighbourhood. Inscriptions of the eleventh and twelfth centuries bear testimony to a prosperous Hindu kingdom of which Bijapur was the capital. The name Bijapur is derived from Vijaya-pur, meaning the City of Victory. For over two hundred years it was the capital of the Adil Shahi dynasty.

The city is famed for many striking buildings, which are characterized by certain distinctive architectural forms known as the Bijapur style. Most of the notable edifices in the city have something peculiar to themselves, either in construction or decoration. In contrast to the architecture of earlier Muhammedan invaders, the Adil Shahi sultans introduced massive and elegant structures. They built spacious domes with ingenious devices for their support, and in executing ornamental details they showed a conspicuous influence of Saracenic architecture. It should be remembered that Sultan Yusuf Adil Shah was a son of Murad, Sultan of Turkey, and that he changed the religion of his dynasty from the Sunni to the Shiah sect. The crescent crowns the finials of several principal buildings in Bijapur.

Fergusson says: "The foreign origin of the Adil Shahi dynasty and their partiality for the Shiah form of Islam prevailing in Persia, rather than the Sunni, together with their ready employment of Persian officers, may probably have influenced their architecture. Be that as it may, it is clear that the calligraphic devices which form an important feature in the Muslim architecture of the Deccan were designed in the first instance by Persian artists."

To turn to the conspicuous architectural remains of the city of Bijapur which covers about 1600 acres, or two and a half square miles. The Jama Masjid, the congregational place of worship, is one of the finest mosques in India. It was commenced by Sultan Ali Adil Shah (1557-1580) but nearly completed by his successors. The area with its courtyard is about 91,000 square feet. With a later extension of the courtyard in the east, the total comes to 116,000 square feet.

The remarkable features of the Jama Masjid are its perfect proportions, the beauty of the graceful minarets, the construction of bulbous domes and the execution of ornamental details. The interior of the mosque is plain but dignified. The whole front and recess of the *mihrab* or prayer-niche is, however, decorated with gilding and inscriptions.

Cousens is of the opinion that the Jama Masjid "is not the work of local builders, for there could have been no indigenous craftsmen, at that time, capable of attempting anything approaching it. Not only its style but its architect and builders must

* "The Monuments of Muslim India," Cam. His. Ind. Vol. III, Chapter XXIII.

have been imported ; and their descendants, no doubt, raised the subsequent buildings of the city."*

The domed tomb-mosque of Sultan Ibrahim II represents a departure from the mosque planning of his predecessors. While its plan was on a small scale—about a hundred and sixteen feet square—he lavished the most exquisite and elaborate decorative style on this mausoleum. From the inscription quoted below it would appear that this perfect gem of an edifice was intended for his wife Taj Sultana's resting place. An inscription on one of the doorways reads:

"Heaven stood astonished at the elevation of this building, and it might be said, when its head rose from the earth, that another heaven was erected. The garden of Paradise has borrowed its beauty from this garden, and every column here is graceful as the cyprus tree in the garden of purity. An angel from heaven announced the date of the structure by saying, 'This building, which makes the heart glad, is the memorial of Taj Sultana.' "

The tomb was completed in 1626 A.D. Sultan Ibrahim II died before his wife Taj Sultana and was buried in it. Hence it is known as the Ibrahim Rauza, although other members of the family have also been interred here. Tombs of men are distinguished by a low arched ridge-stone upon the top of the tombstone.

The interior of the sepulchral chamber is richly decorated. Here we see richly carved wooden doors, panels with inscriptions from the Quran in raised Persian letters, and large fanlight-shaped windows which are indeed exquisite specimens of perfected stone work. These windows and such perforated screens of geometrical design serve the same purpose of admitting a subdued light into the chamber as the stained glass windows in Gothic cathedrals.

The ceiling is built of slabs of stone set edge to edge, apparently, with no support. "This has been a daring piece of work," writes Cousens, "carried out in defiance of all ordinary rules and regulations governing the construction of buildings." The secret lay in the use of masses of well-made concrete (mortar) and in the skill of the architect to accomplish various designs with it.

The exterior walls of the sepulchral chamber are elaborately decorated with "shallow surface tracery in stone of arabesques." Interlaced with these ornamental designs, we notice inscriptions from the Quran.

The Rauza is noted for rich cornices and graceful minarets. The grouping of the miniature minars round the bases of the corner minarets is extremely attractive. Every possible decorative design was thus executed with extraordinary skill in order to break the monotony of the general outline of the buildings. "The perforated parapets," writes a British archaeologist, "round the skyline of the buildings look from a distance like a fringe of petrified lace."

Sultan Ibrahim II was a great patron of architecture, and during his reign Bijapur was at the height of its glory. The buildings erected by him and his successors compare favourably in artistic elegance with the best traditions of Indo-Muslim

* Henry Cousens: *The Architectural Antiquities of Western India,* India Society, 1926.

architecture. The architectural treasures of Bijapur are indeed reminders of a great Muslim dynasty that ruled the kingdom for over 200 years. Among the palaces, tombs, mosques and other public buildings built by rulers of the dynasty within the fort, the Gagan Mahal (Assembly Hall), the Sat Manzli (seven-storeyed palace), the Makka Masjid, the Chini Mahal (granary), and the Anand Mahal (the Palace of Delight) may be mentioned. All these edifices are splendid specimens of the Bijapur style of architecture.

The Gagan Mahal, built in 1561 A.D., must have been an impressive reception hall whence the king and his nobles observed public functions such as tournaments and military displays. Its architecture is noted for the large façade arch which spans the front. Here in 1686 the Emperor Aurangzeb received the young Sultan Sikandar, the last of the Adil Shahi dynasty, "amid the passionate tears of the nobles and the wailing cries of thousands, which rose to the throne of God as a witness against the causeless aggressor."*

The Sat Manzli was a favourite residence of the sultans. In its harmonious proportions and grace of finish, it is a singularly beautiful palace. It was decorated with mural paintings. The Anand Mahal is another picturesque palace surrounded by remains of terraced walks, fountains and gardens. The Makka Masjid, especially built for the ladies of the Court, is graceful. It has no *mimbar* (pulpit).

Next in importance comes the tomb of a Muslim saint named Pir Amil. It is ornamented with richly moulded cusps and its domes are regularly whitewashed. The tomb is an object of great veneration and is well looked after.

Sultan Ibrahim II planned to build a summer capital and chose a valley surrounded by hills for the purpose. "He summoned masons and twenty thousand workmen from all quarters . . . . and his nobles and ministers, as well as the more wealthy merchants, were pressed into this work, and were prevailed upon to add their quota to the buildings rising upon the new site." The plan was drawn up on an ambitious scale ; the capital was intended to cover an area of some nine miles in circumference. But this undertaking was not fully carried out, although a number of palaces were built in Nauraspur—the name of the new city—for his residence. Among the ruins we find the Sangat Mahal, the Nari Mahal, the Tagani Mahal and several mosques and tombs.

The style of architecture of the palaces built by the sultans of the Adil Shahi dynasty combines, broadly speaking, beauty of detail with grace of finish. One of the fundamental qualities of these edifices is the sense of proportion which has not been affected even in the execution of somewhat grandiose designs.

The celebrated Gol Gumbaz, or, as it is often called, the Boli Gumbaz, was built by Sultan Muhammad Shah who came to the throne of Bijapur in 1626. Imbued with a passion for elegant architecture, he created many fine buildings in his capital ; but by contrast his own tomb excels in its colossal proportions.

* Colonel Meadows Taylor and J. Fergusson: *Architecture of Bijapur.*

The Gol Gumbaz covers an area of 18,337 square feet—an area larger than that of the Roman Pantheon. No other single apartment among ancient edifices has a floor space of this magnitude. The dome of this massive building looms large against the horizon of the rolling plain and is seen from a distance of twenty-five miles. This dome is probably the second largest in the world—its internal height is 178 feet. The construction of the dome is of considerable interest from the point of view of architectural technique.

In ordinary Saracenic domes, the lines of the square are carried up to the dome, and the octagon, at the springing of the dome, has the same diameter as the square. But the dome of the Gol or Boli Gumbaz is built in a series of ingenious pendentives.* The method has been extraordinarily successful, and its success reflects the skill and ingenuity of the Bijapur architects in dome-building.

"The most ingenious and novel part of the construction of this dome," writes Fergusson, "is the mode in which its lateral outward thrust is counteracted. This was accomplished by forming the pendentives so that they not only cut off the angles but that their arches intersect one another, and form a very considerable mass of masonry perfectly stable in itself ; and, by its weight acting inwards, counteracting any thrust that can possibly be brought to bear upon it by the pressure of the dome. If the whole edifice thus balanced has any tendency to move, it is to fall inwards, which from its circular form is impossible ; while the action of the weight of the pendentives being in the opposite direction to that of the dome, it acts like a tie, and keeps the whole in equilibrium, without interfering at all with the outline of the dome."

The most extraordinary and complex example of dome-construction makes the Gol or Boli Gumbaz one of the most striking edifices in the world. As Cousens says, "Sultan Muhammad certainly succeeded in raising the most conspicuous mass of masonry in the Deccan: indeed, one of the greatest in the world."

It is necessary to stand at some distance from the building in order to get a general idea of its architectural magnificence. Its general contour follows that of a great cube surmounted by the dome described above, with an octagonal tower eight storeys high at each of its four corners. Each tower is crowned by a smaller dome of great elegance. Between these towers there is at the height of some eighty feet, a striking stone cornice projecting to the extent of about twelve feet from the wall. This cornice is another example of that daring and virile architectural style characteristic of Sultan Muhammad's constructions.

The interior of this vast chamber rising to the apex of the dome is very impressive. Like St. Paul's Cathedral and similar domed structures, it has a "whispering gallery," echoes of which rebound greatly intensified from wall to wall. Loud laughter is answered by a score of fiends hidden behind the plaster.

* A pendentive is an architectural device by which each of spherical triangles is formed by intersection of dome by two pairs of opposite arches springing from the four supporting columns.

The slightest sound is heard from one side to the other, the ticking of a watch being distinctly audible while a single clap is echoed over ten times.

IV

The town of Gogi lies in the Gulbarga district of the State. At one time it formed part of the Bijapur kingdom and enjoyed great patronage from the Adil Shahi kings. While the archaeological monuments of the town throw much light upon the history of this period, recent survey and excavations have yielded stone relics which indicate that the site of the town was once a neolithic settlement.

The mosque of Fatima Sultana, a sister of Ali Adil Shah, is an attractive piece of architecture in the Bijapur style. The prayer hall is a plain single room with three arched openings facing the east and surmounted by a narrow-necked dome. The large petals surrounding the narrow drum of the dome, the delicate floral parapet running all round the building, the handsome stone *chajjas* placed on dainty brackets of the same material and the slim but plain masonry minarets with large and rather disproportionate heads at the corners of the building constitute a characteristic ensemble of the mode of architecture in the Adil Shahi tradition. This picturesque mosque was built by Fatima Sultana within the dargah area of a saint called Hazrat Chanda Shah Husani.

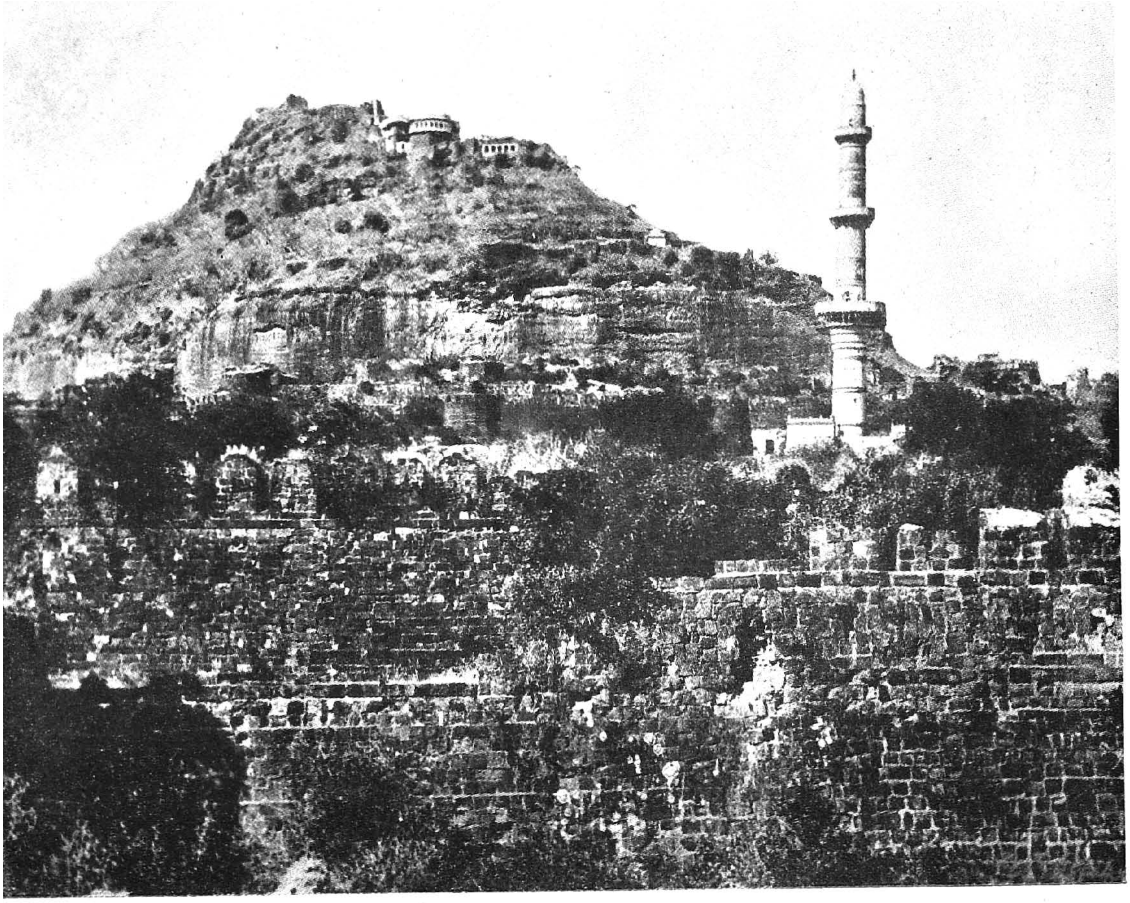
The Adil Shahi kings had a profound reverence for this saint. Three of the successors of the founder of the dynasty, Yusuf Turk (later Yusuf Adil Shah), had expressed the wish to be buried near the saint's dargah. Meadows Taylor writes: "No mausoleum was built over him ; and in the precincts of the holy burying-ground his open tomb is as simple as many others, and an endowment, which has been preserved, still provides a covering of cotton chintz for it, renewed from year to year. Thus, as the people of Gogi assert, with honourable pride, there are not as yet faithful servants wanting to the noble king to light a lamp at night at his grave, and to say *fatihas* for his soul's peace, while the tombs of the great Bahmani kings and of all his enemies in life are desecrated."* This monument is held in great esteem to this day.

The graves of the saint and his son are situated on a high rectangular platform which is covered by a flat roof with a floral parapet. This parapet is studded with low turrets. Our attention is, however, drawn to the platform which is surrounded by an elegant enclosure, the walls of which are pierced with exquisite trellis screens executed in cut-plaster. There are no steps leading to the platform, nor is there any other means of approach. The pilgrims are thus obliged to keep at a respectful distance from the graves and they present their offerings of flowers and incense by means of a long wooden ladle provided for the purpose on the spot.

So far we have confined ourselves to palaces and mosques, but it should not be

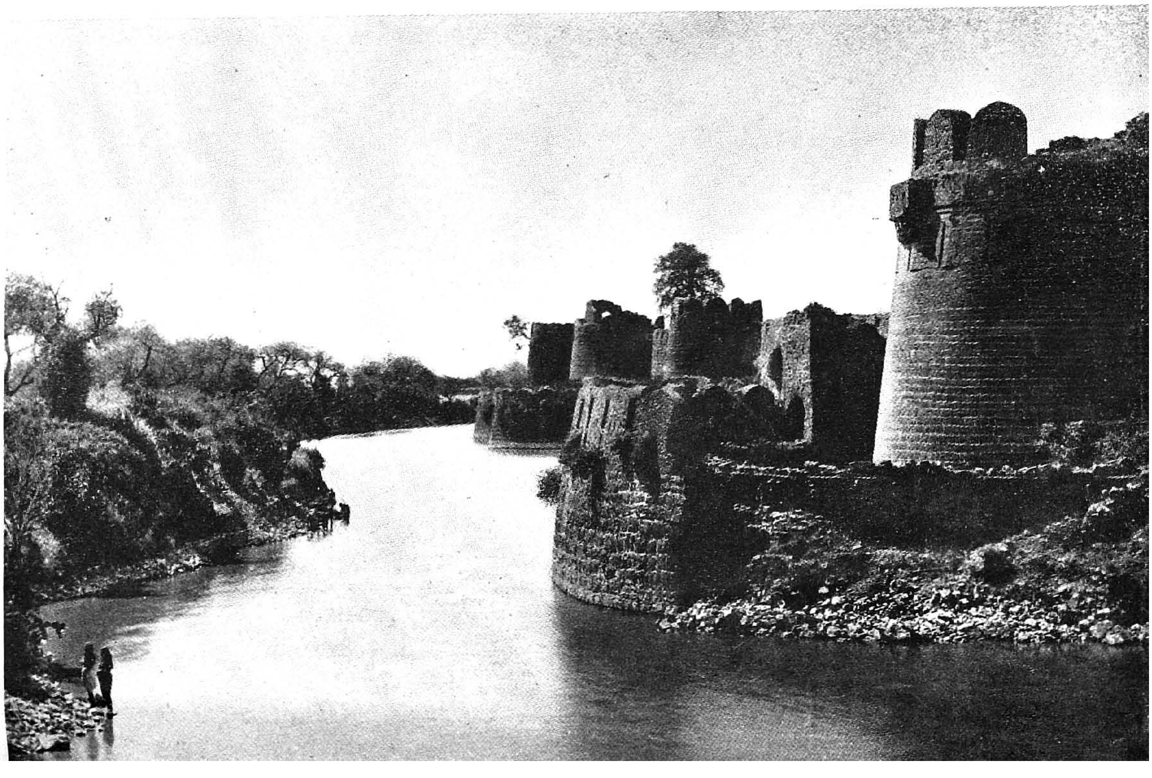
* Meadows Taylor: *Manual of the History of India.*

Tomb of Sultan Muhammad Kuli Kutb Shah, Golconda



The Fortress, Daulatabad

The Fortress, Bidar



thought that the Bijapur sultans gave no attention to public works. According to Ferishta, the large masonry pond near the Shahapur Gate and the watercourses which carried water to the city were constructed by Sultan Ali Adil Shah. The Torvi conduit is a vast work of considerable engineering skill. A site was chosen on a stream about a mile from Torvi and a dam in masonry was built across the valley. From the lake thus formed, a channel built in stone sunk in the bed of the stream carried the water in the neighbourhood of Torvi, and from there an underground channel brought the supply to a large reservoir. The remains of the reservoir at Afzulpur show that it was a work of great size.

But with the increase of population in the city of Bijapur it became necessary to explore further sources of water supply. A site was chosen among the hills to the south of the city, and a large lake was formed by throwing a dam about a mile in length across the valley. The area of the lake was about five hundred acres, and as it was higher than the city there was ample pressure to raise the water to the necessary height. Large square towers were built to relieve the pressure of the water and prevent the pipes from bursting. The architecture of these distributary towers displays considerable skill.

Next in importance comes the Begum Talao or Queen's Pond, which is the city's source of water supply. It was constructed by Sultan Mahmud Adil Shah in honour of his queen Jahan Begum in 1653. Among the public wells, the Taj Well, built by Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II, was the most famous.

V

Golconda was the capital of the Kutb Shahi dynasty, and Sultan Kuli Kutb-ul-Mulk laid its foundation in 1518 A.D. after declaring his independence from the Bahmani kingdom. His first act was to strengthen the fortifications of the city.

The tombs of the sultans of the Kutb Shahi dynasty form an extensive and picturesque group of edifices bearing the characteristic features of Indo-Muslim archaeology; but the edifices erected by the Kutb Shahi sultans all have a certain individuality of their own. We notice, for example, the profusion of plaster decoration over the façades, and the construction of the deep arched ornamental galleries round the minars, which differentiate them from the conventional style in the rest of the Deccan.

Among the tombs, the one of Sultan Muhammad Kuli-Kutb Shahi is an imposing structure, about a hundred and sixty-eight feet high with a frieze over the main storey. It was built in 1625 A.D. The dome is situated on an elevated square terrace, a hundred feet each way, and is internally octagonal. Sultan Kuli was a great builder, and he originated an electic style, known as Kutb Shahi style, combining certain forms characteristic of Persian, Pathan, and Hindu architecture. The tomb of his successor, Sultan Abdulla Kutb Shahi, has rich parapets and cornices around the principal and upper storey. These tombs are built of black

basalt or green stone. The construction of the dome—a favourite feature of Muslim architecture—was followed with precision by the builders of these edifices.

Among the architectural monuments within the fort of Golconda, Jama Masjid, Madanna temple, Sultan Ibrahim Shah's mosque and the Baradari are in a good state of preservation. The Madanna temple belongs to the Rajahs of Warangal and is named after a Brahmin minister. "This temple is a striking proof," writes a Muslim historian, "of the toleration of Islamic kings who allowed its exsitence in close proximity to their own residence and the Assembly Mosque." A secret subterranean passage connects the Baradari with the Royal Palace known as Gosha Mahal, a distance of about five miles.

The Jama Masjid was built by Sultan Kuli Kutb-ul-Mulk. It is composed of a large hall divided into four aisles and five arches. The entire courtyard is paved with slabs of granite.

The dome of Sultan Ibrahim was decorated with Persian enamelled tiles, traces of which still exist. He was famed for his piety, and inscriptions engraved on his sarcophagus bear witness to his faith in the Shiah creed. The following translation of three of these inscriptions may interest the reader:

"There is no God but God, Muhammad is the apostle of God and Ali the friend of God. Verily, verily! God hath borne witness that there is no God but He, and angels and those who are endowed with wisdom profess the same which executeth righteousness. There is no God but He, the Mighty, the Wise."

"True is God, the High, the Great. True is His Apostle, the benevolent Prophet, and we bear witness to that, praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures."

"The occupant of this high and noble tomb, and he is the Sultan whose sins have been forgiven and the king whom God has taken into His mercy, the pious defunct, who is clad with garment of Divine acceptance—the Sultan Ibrahim Qutb Shah. May God illumine his arguments and cause him to dwell with his friends in His Paradise. Marched to the neighbourhood of Divine Mercy on Thursday, the 21st of Rabi II, 998 years after the flight of the Prophet."*

To return to the spectacular assembly of the domes of the Golconda sultans. "These domes were held in such veneration," writes Bilgrami, "that whenever any criminal took refuge there, he was given amnesty and during the Qutb Shahi period the tombs were always furnished with expensive carpets and lamps and a number of Qurans were kept on supports, which were recited by the readers at appointed intervals. . . . In the Qutb Shahi days this place was called 'Langar-e-Faiz Athar,' a place for the bountiful entertainment, where the poor were entertained every afternoon. . . . ."

During the reign of Sultan Ibrahim, Golconda had become an extensive and prosperous market for the Turkish, Persian and Arab traders. The name of Golconda is associated with some of the most famous diamonds in history. The crown jewels of the British royal house, Tsarist Russia and several other European

* Translated by Syed Ali Asgar Bilgrami.

monarchs included diamonds, rubies and sapphires from the treasure land of the Deccan. The city of Golconda had a flourishing industry: the cutting and polishing of precious gems. Some of them have become historic.

The famous Koh-i-nur (Mountain of Light) which now adorns the British crown was discovered in 1656. From the regalia of the Emperor Shahjahan, it found its way to Afghanistan. Ater the first Afghan War, the jewel was recovered from Shah Shuja, then ruling prince, by Ranjit Singh of the Punjab. The Punjab was annexed in 1849 and the diamond came into the possession of the East India Company, among the Sikh crown jewels, as spoils of victory. But John Lawrence put it in a waistcoat pocket and forgot all about it. Then followed an amusing incident. Lord Dalhousie wrote that Queen Victoria had ordered it to be sent to England immediately. Lawrence gave the order saying, "Send for it at once." "But you have it," was the reply. This was a great shock to Lawrence. He then sent for his personal servant. "Luckily," writes Thompson, "this individual thought it was nothing, sahib, but a bit of glass, and had preserved the box when he went through his master's pockets. John lost no further time in dispatching it to become part of the British Crown."* The diamond ranks first among the British crown jewels.

The tale of another diamond, the Orloff, is equally interesting. "Originally set as the eye of a god in a temple between Madras and Mysore, it was stolen by a French soldier, caring nothing for the wrath of a Hindu deity, and sold for ten thousand dollars, plus an annuity of twenty thousand, to the Russian Prince Orloff, at that time deeply in love with Catherine the Great. To her he gave it ; and so it passed from the eye of a god to glitter in the sceptre of Imperial Russia."†

VI

The city of Hyderabad was founded in 1591 when Sultan Muhammad Kuli transferred the capital from Golconda, seven miles west. It is situated on the right bank of the river Musi. Few cities in south India, ancient or modern, have greater historical interest and none can boast of such a rich heritage of temples, mosques, palaces, tombs and other relics of a buried past.

The city was first named Bhagnagar but it was renamed Hyderabad after one of the titles of Ali. The old city was surrounded by parapet walls, crenellated like battlements, enclosing about eighteen square miles. From the close of the sixteenth to the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the city was ruled by various dynasties. Early in 1725 the first of the Nizams made Hyderabad his capital.

We have seen that the sultans of the Kutb Shahi dynasty were great builders. Sultan Muhammad Kuli had a genuine love for noble architecture and left edifices in Hyderabad which were imposing landmarks in the history of Indo-Muslim

* Edward Thompson and G. T. Garratt: *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, 1935.

†Maud Diver: *Royal India*, 1941.

styles. Not only did he build the city on proper lines, which would do credit to any town-planning expert of the present day, but also built many mosques, schools, hospitals, caravanserais, tanks, bridges and palaces. It was through his inspiration that the noblemen of his court added much to the embellishment of his capital.

The Char Minar (Four Towers) is a masterpiece of Kutb Shahi architecture. The legend attached to this building is a picturesque one. The minar is an imitation of structure (*tazia*) representing the tomb of Imam Hussain, paraded at the Moharrum festival. Owing to an outbreak of cholera the inhabitants erected a huge *tazia* in the heart of the city during the Moharrum festival so that it might serve as a charm to safeguard them from the epidemic ; and when it subsided, the huge Char Minar building was constructed of stone and mortar at the same place.* Four roads radiate from it. Each of the four minarets is a hundred and eighty feet high.

The Char Minar was built in 1593, two years after the transfer of the capital. For a description, we may turn to an interesting record left by a French traveller, Thevenot, who visited the city about the middle of the seventeenth century. He writes: "That which is called Four Towers is a square building of which each face is ten fathoms broad and about seven fathoms high. It is open in the four sides by four arches, four or five fathoms high and four fathoms wide, and every one of these arches fronts a street of the same breadth as the arch. There are two galleries in it one over another, and over all a terrace that serves for a roof bordered with a stone balcony, and at each corner of that building, a decagonal tower about ten fathoms high and each tower has four galleries with little arches. On the outside, the whole building is adorned with roses and festoons pretty well cut. It is vaulted underneath and appears like a dome which has in the inside all round balusters of stone, pierced and open as the gallery on the outside, and there are several doors in the walls."

The Char Minar had rooms which are said to have been used as a madrasah or school and a masjid or hall of prayer. A channel was constructed for the purpose of supplying water to the palace. By an ingenious device water was raised to the top of the Char Minar. Adjoining the four towers, there is a Char-su-ka-hauz (cistern of four roads) encircled by four arches. From a balcony erected here, the king used to witness the manœuvres of his troops and give audience to the people.

The striking edifice close to the Char Minar is the great Jama Masjid, the congregational mosque built in 1598 A.D. As is usual, the Masjid contains almost all the essential features of similar mosques throughout the Muslim world. The façade of the masjid, with its archways, is in conformity with the traditional style possessing individual characteristics of the modes of building mosques.

In India Muslim rulers have erected a Jama Masjid or congregational mosque in every important capital. The mosque at Jaunpur was completed during the reign

* MSS: Tuzuke Qutb Shahi.

of Hussain Shah (1452-1478). The masjid in Ahmedabad, writes Fergusson, "though not remarkable for its size, is one of the most beautiful mosques in the East." It has tall graceful minarets flanking the great central arch of the façade, and within the mosque are two hundred and fifty-two pillars and seventy-six pilasters supporting fifteen domes symmetricallly arranged.

The Jama Masjid is the finest building in the city of Mandu, now in the State of Dhar. It is simple but dignified in outline, characterizing that sobriety which is an essential feature of mosque architecture. The masjid was completed in 1454 A.D. The first great congregational mosque in the Deccan was built at Gulbarga. Its architectural form, as already mentioned, is based on that of the Great Mosque at Cordoba.

To return to the Jama Masjid in the city of Hyderabad. On the gate of the masjid there is an inscription which runs somewhat as follows:

"A ruler who is a King of Kings,
In whose reign virtue received due recognition ;
In whose utterances, the heart is comforted
And the life becomes refreshed.
He has rendered the Earth so beautiful,
Even Heaven envies its beauty
And the 'garden of Iran' is put to shame.

Under his august commands,
A mosque has been built,
Below the roof of which heaven revolves like a ball.
Paradise is come to stay in its courtyard
And continues to work every moment.

I feel proud to see that in that spot
All the virtues of Islam are exercised to one's heart's content.
If anybody asks you about the date of its construction
Tell him it is 1006 (1598 A.D.)
This is a superb lofty edifice of virtue
(Completed under the auspices of Malik Amin-ul-Mulk.)"

The famous Mecca Masjid is another congregational mosque which can accommodate over ten thousand worshippers. Its construction was begun during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Kutb Shah but the work could not be completed by his successors owing to Emperor Aurangzeb's Deccan campaign. Tavernier, the French traveller, left a record of his impression of this edifice, which may be of interest to the reader. He writes:

"About fifty years since they began to build a magnificent Pagod (Mecca Masjid) in the city, which would have been the finest in all India had it been finished. The stones are to be admired for their enormous size. And that wherein the niche (*mihrab*) is constructed, which is on that side where they say their prayers, is seen entire rock of such prodigious bulk that it was five years before five or six hundred men continually engaged could cut it out of its place. They were also to roll it along a

platform with wheels, upon which they brought it to the Pagod ; and several affirmed to me that there were fourteen hundred oxen to draw it."

This impressive building, regarded as the *Kaaba* of the Deccan, is two hundred and twenty-five feet long, a hundred and eight feet wide and seventy-five feet high. It is composed of triple vestibules with fifteen arches in each row and five masonic arches in front. The northern and southern extremities are surmounted by two domes. Aurangzeb added two striking minarets in front of the main entrance gate. It is said that during the Kutb Shahi period thirty-six maunds of food were cooked and distributed to the poor every day in the spacious courtyard of the mosque.

Besides the two principal congregational mosques in the city, there are several others which have been built by rulers and nobles for use by them and their families. The Toli mosque, erected in the early seventeenth century, was designed for family worship. It is largely built of polished stone. Two minarets, each sixty feet high, flank it at either side. The mosque of Mian Mishk is a further example of a private masjid.

Another interesting specimen of a Kutb Shahi mosque is situated close to the Ghasal Wadi. It is called Ghassalan-ki-Masjid. The roof of the mosque consists of three flat domes and rests upon two arches. The *mihrab* has an inscriptional tablet of black basalt, from which we gather that the mosque was built in order to win divine mercy for Bibi Khadija, daughter of the Shaikh of Awand.

Our survey of Muslim monuments in the State would be incomplete without a reference to the mausoleum of Aurangzeb's wife Rabia-ud-Daurani built near Aurangabad in 1679. The mausoleum stands within an arena enclosed by a crenellated wall with bastions at intervals. The arched recesses are divided by pilasters crowned with minarets. On either side of the main cusped arch are two smaller arches one above the other. A large marble dome rises above the tomb with four minarets at the corner angles. The sarcophagus itself is enclosed by an octagonal screen of perforated marble.

Aurangzeb intended the mausoleum of his wife to rival the Taj Mahal ; but although he succeeded in raising a beautiful edifice, it lacked the architectural grace and unrivalled decorations of the Taj. The groundwork of marble, for example, is not laid with precious stones as in the Taj Mahal, but profusely decorated with wreaths, frets, and other elegant forms in stucco-plaster. On the whole the edifice shows a marked deterioration of artistic taste and of architectural style. "The result," as Percy Brown remarks, "is very mediocre production, the relation of height to width being unpleasing, leading to a loss of dignity and a congestion of the structures around the base of the dome. Almost every arch is demeaned with miniature cusps, the cornices garnished by insipid mouldings, and the surfaces are aggravated by spiritless arabesques. Those outstanding qualities of simplicity and breadth which make the Taj so profound and satisfying have been disregarded, and meaningless efforts at embellishment have been applied all over the building. But although the structure as a whole shows such marked evidences

of debasement, the same cannot be said of some of the applied art with which it is decorated. The fine quality of some of the accessories proves that good craftsmen were still available. . . . The hand of the craftsman was still effective, it was the spirit of the art that had declined."* But what survives gives one an impressive picture of Indo-Muslim architecture in the State of Hyderabad. And it is here that the rich traditions of Islamic culture are blended with the spirit of the modern age.

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES LIBRARY
ACC. No. 6472
EGMORE, MADRAS-600 008

* "Monuments of the Moghul Period," Cam. Hist. Ind. Vol. IV, Chap. XVIII.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DECCAN FORTS

THE history of the Deccan is for the most part a record of internecine struggles. The reigning dynasties, both Hindu and Muslim, erected a fortress at almost every strategic point in their kingdoms.

"Unfortunately, the military architecture of the Deccan," writes Sir John Marshall, "has attracted little or no attention from archaeologists, and the data at present available are insufficient to enable us to discriminate with confidence between successive periods of building or to determine which parts are attributable to the Hindu founders, which to the provincial governors from Delhi and which to the Bahmani, Qutb Shahi or other dynasties that followed them.* The excavation and preservation of these fortresses, dating from both Hindu and Muslim times are producing evidence of their skill in military architecture."

The work of the Department of Archaeology has already thrown some light upon the various types of forts in the Nizam's Dominions. Dr. Yazdani writes:

"The mud walls of the Warangal fort and the unshapely watch towers of our modern villages are reminiscent of the early military architecture of the plains of the Deccan. With the advance of knowledge, masonry seems to have been introduced in building defence-walls, first in crude forms, but later quite regularly, although the size of the stones, as in the cyclopean walls, remained a significant feature of the military architecture of the Deccan until the advent of the Muslims... Apart from the large size of the masonry, the other distinguishing features of the Hindu military constructions are the irregular form of the stones and the entire absence of the use of cement of any kind. The joints of the stones were first perfectly chiselled, and then they were laid one above the other, being kept together only by their enormous weight.

With the advent of the Muslims in the Deccan, a vigorous style of military architecture grew up, and the use of the guns under Turkish officers and engineers in the latter half of the fifteenth century brought about still further improvements in the principles and material of building as well as in the laying out of the defences. The present fortifications of the majority of the Deccan forts bear a striking resemblance in their arrangement to the mediæval European forts, the influence of the Turkish engineers being apparently the cause of this similarity."†

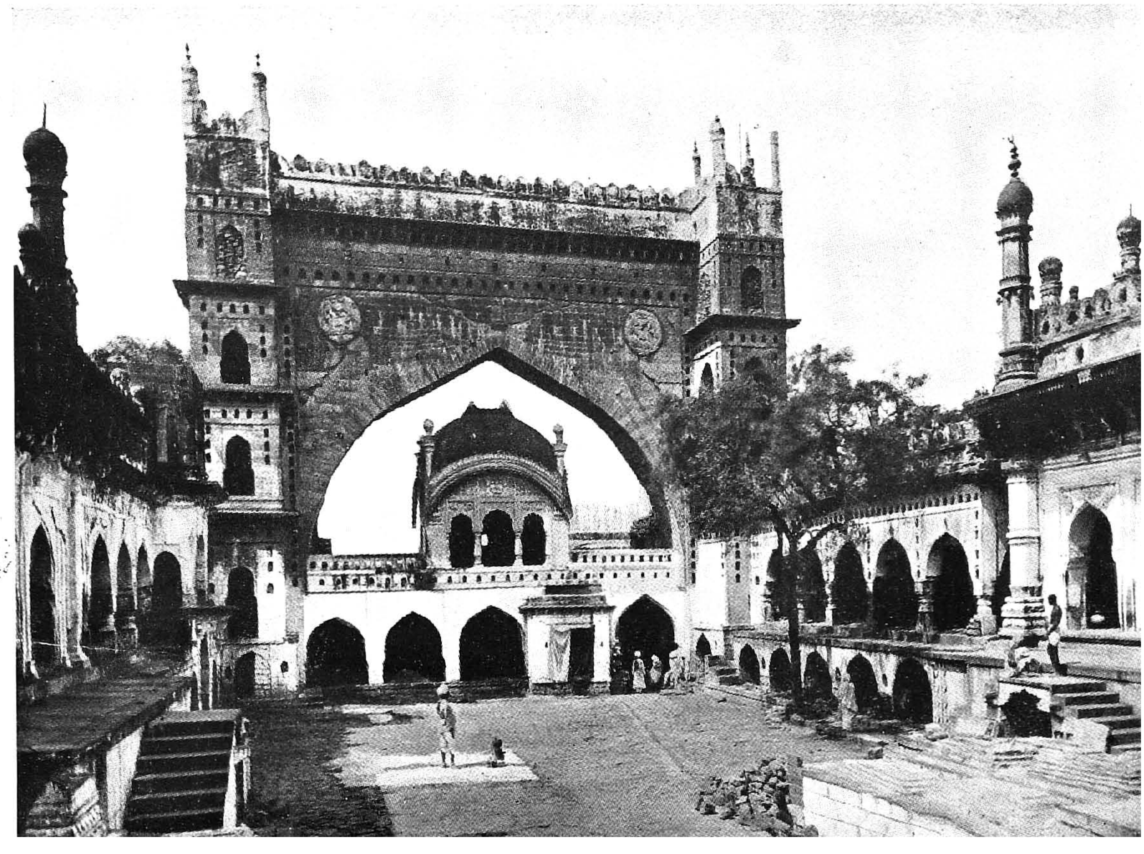
The principal strongholds found in the State are Daulatabad, Mudgal, Warangal, Bidar, Parenda and Golconda. The finest of all these edifices is the

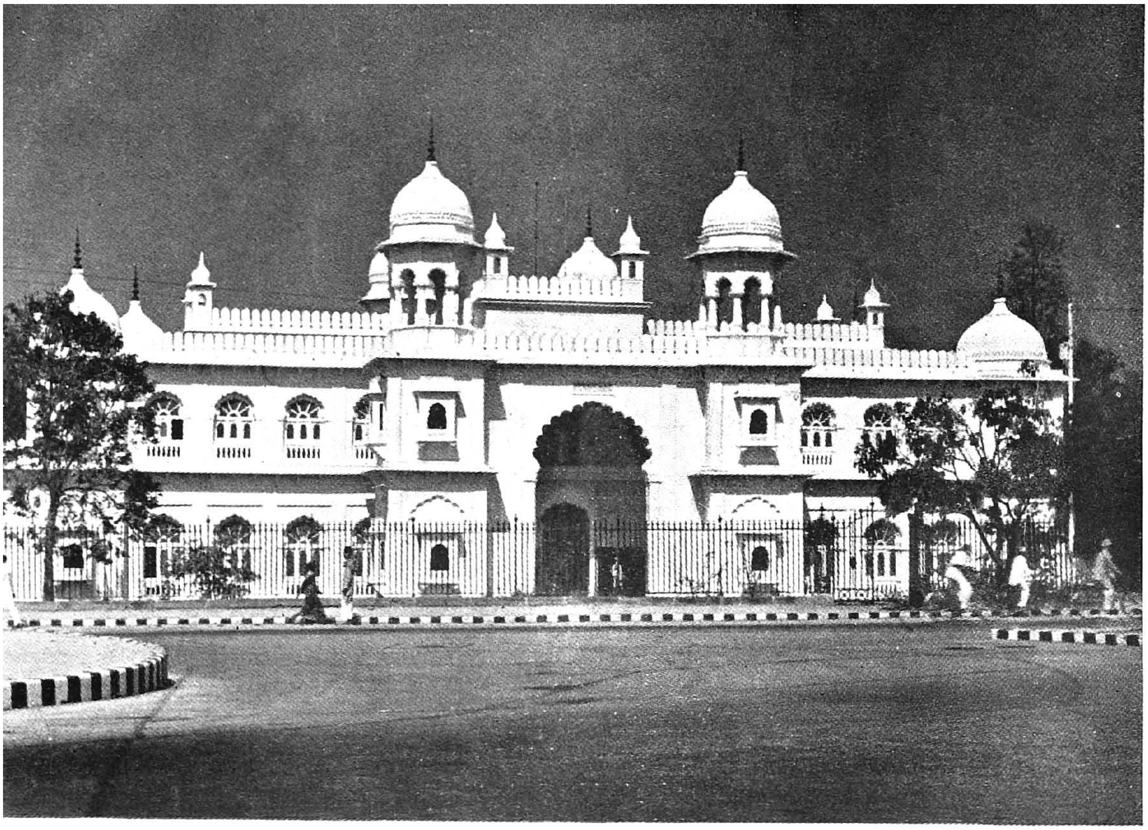
* "The Monuments of Muslim India," Cam. Hist. of India. Vol. III.

† *Revealing India's Past,* Chapter VII. 1939.

Ruins of the Fort, Golconda

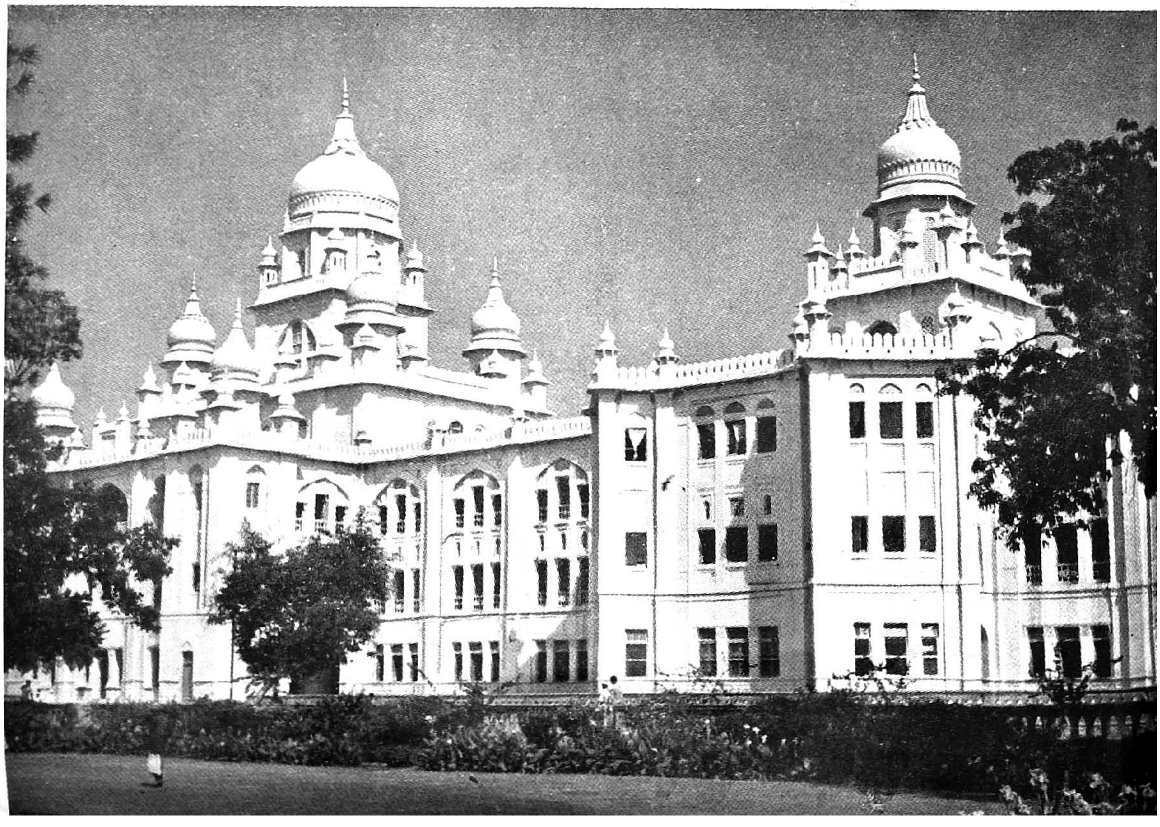
The courtyard, Gulbarga Fort





The Museum, Hyderabad.

Osmania General Hospital, Hyderabad



famous fortress of Daulatabad or Deogiri, "the Holy Fort," as the Hindus call it. It is situated on an isolated hill 600 feet in height and was regarded as invulnerable. In the twelfth century A.D. it was the capital of the Yadava dynasty. In the year 1294, Ala-ud-din, the nephew of the Sultan of Delhi, laid siege to it. The Yadava king Ramachandra Rao was totally defeated, but in order to save the fort from occupation by the invader, he agreed to pay him an immense amount of treasure and thus temporarily saved it. In 1308 it passed into the possession of the Sultan of Delhi, who renamed it Daulatabad (the City of Fortune). Later, the sultans of the Bahmani dynasty greatly strengthened the walls, building stone battlements and round bastions. A greater part of the escarpment is hewn out of solid rock scarped artificially to a greater height. It is said that the rock all over is smoothed so ingeniously, from the base of the fort to the level of the water, that even a snake or an ant would ascend it with difficulty!

As is usual, there is a broad, deep moat running right round. The fort itself has a series of concentric ramparts heavily built, and in the heart of the rock on which the fort stands, there is a dark and tortuous passage like the ascent of a minaret. The steps are cut in the rock, and the base is closed by an iron gate, the only passage through which the fortress is entered. At times of siege, this passage was rendered impassable by an ingenious contrivance. "By the passage a large iron brazier had been constructed, which, when necessary, could be placed in the middle of it, and a fire being kindled in the brazier, its heat would effectually prevent all progress. The ordinary means of besieging a fort by mines, etc., are of no avail against it."

The outer wall has a perimeter of about three miles and between it and the citadel are three inner walls, each loopholed and battlemented and each furnished with fortified gateways and bastions. From a Frenchman who lived for two years within the fort, M. Thevenot came to learn that besides the citadel proper there were three other forts inside the fortified area. These forts were named Bar-kot, Mar-kot and Kala-kot. The defences were so devised that "with the help of salient and re-entrant angles the maximum of fire could be directed against an assailant."

Another French traveller, M. Tavernier found "a great number of excellent pieces of cannon" in the fort. He tells the story of a Dutch engineer who, after serving the king for a long period, desired to return to his country. His petition was not granted, but when the king became engaged in a war with Ṣivaji, the Dutch engineer waited upon the king and undertook to mount a cannon on the hill which commanded the fortress. This was agreed to, and after he succeeded in his venture, the king obtained the Emperor's sanction for his leave. The Dutch engineer soon embarked for his own country. Tavernier described Daulatabad as one of the best forts in the empire of the Great Mogul, the road leading to it being so narrow as to admit of one horse or one camel at a time. The Fort was lost to the Moguls in the time of Akbar but was retaken in 1633 from the Nizam Shahi ruler. Accord-

ing to Tavernier in order to deceive the Bijapur ruler, Shah Jahan insulted the general in command in public in consequence of which he sought refuge with the enemy and the latter agreed to send him to Daulatabad with the ladies of his harem. The camels which brought the party, however, hid well-trained soldiers in place of women and the camel drivers. Once in the fort it was easy for them to slaughter the garrison not on guard and make themselves master of the place.

The fortress has a long subterranean passage with numerous chambers hewn out of rock. These chambers were probably used for prisoners. From another traveller we have an account of Daulatabad in which he refers to these dungeons.

The Moorish traveller Ibn Batuta, who visited south India during his long sojourn in India, left an interesting account of Daulatabad. He did not write the narrative himself, but was content to dictate to a copyist the description of the places he visited. He was in India from 1333 to 1345 A.D.

He says, "From Ujjain we went to Daulatabad, a large and illustrious city which rivals the capital, Delhi, in importance and in the vastness of its layout. It is divided into three parts. One is Daulatabad proper, reserved for the residence of the Sultan and his troops, the second part is called Katkah (Sanskrit: *Kataka,* camp) ; and the third is the citadel, unequalled for its strength, and called Devagir.

At Daulatabad resides the great Khan, Qutlu Khan, preceptor to the Sultan. He is the commandant of the city, and represents the Sultan there as well as in the lands of Saghar, Tiling and their dependencies. The territory of these provinces extends for three months' march, and is well populated. It is entirely under the authority of Qutlu Khan and his lieutenants. The fortress is a rock situated in the midst of a plain ; the rock has been scarped and a castle built on its summit ; it is reached by a leather ladder which is raised at night.

There live with their children the *mufrid,* that is to say, the zimamy—soldiers entered in the army lists. In its dungeons are imprisoned persons convicted of serious crimes. In these dungeons there are huge rats, bigger than cats. In truth, cats run away from them as they are unable to resist their attacks. Hence they can be caught only by recourse to ruses. I saw these rats at the fortress and marvelled at them.

In the course of his Deccan campaign, Emperor Shahjahan required the total submission of the Sultan of Ahmadnagar and besieged the fortress of Daulatabad. Fath Khan, son of Malik Ambar, the African who rose to prominence in the State after his successful resistance to the Moghul army did much to strengthen the defence, especially the works known as Ambar Kat of Daulatabad, of the fortress against the imperial forces.

Following the explosion of a mine and the surrender of a small contingent of troops within the fortress, Fath Khan was obliged to ask for an armistice. "An epidemic had broken out in the fortress, and Fath Khan was now alarmed for the

safety and honour of his own ladies and the harem of the king. To save them he sent his son (as a hostage) with a prayer for forgiveness and help to remove the women. Exulting in his victory Mahabat Khan (then Viceroy of Khandesh and the Deccan) was generous, and not only provided his own elephants and camels with several litters for the women, but also restored some of the treasure already taken.

At the end of June, 1633, after a siege of three and a half months, Fath Khan yielded up the stronghold with all guns and munitions of war, and Mahabat Khan, entering, had prayers read in the name of the Emperor."*

Among the ruins of Daulatabad, there are palaces, gateways, towers, temples, mosques, *dargas* and tombs. The Chini Mahal, where the last of the sultans of Golconda was confined by Aurangzeb, is of archaeological interest. On the eastern façade of the palace there are remnants of blue and yellow enamelled tiles. The minar or the pillar of victory was erected by Ala-ud-din Bahmani to commemorate his conquest of Daulatabad. It is about 100 feet high and is surmounted by a spire. About mid-way there is a gallery supported on ornamental brackets, with a balustrade all round. The Minar, known as Chand Minar, was decorated with glazed Persian tiles of a diamond shape. The gateways and towers of the fortress are ornamented with carvings of lions, elephants and with lotus and floral designs.

At the foot of the fort we see a Hindu temple, the roof of which is supported by one hundred and fifty square-shaped pillars carved with numerous figures of the Hindu pantheon and with ornamental designs. A portion of this temple has been converted into a mosque. A number of half-finished rock-hewn chaityas was recently discovered under the great rock of the citadel. The style of architecture of these excavations appears to correspond to that of the later Brahmanical structures of Ellora.

The Mudgal Fort is in the south-west of Raichur district. It has an almost continual history from the time of the Hindu kings of the Yadava dynasty down to the period when Mudgal was included in the State of Hyderabad under the Treaty of 1860.

In the beginning of the fourteenth century Mudgal was an important outpost of the Kakatiya kingdom, and after the establishment of the Bahmani kingdom in Gulbarga, it became the centre of continuous warfare between the Bahmani sultans and the Hindu kings of Vijayanagar.

The defences of the fort were greatly improved by the Adil Shahi sultans. It has a wide moat beyond which there is a scarp with a row of massive bastions. The construction of masonry at several parts of the fort is in the Hindu style, but the arch-shaped parapet is distinctly Muslim in design and execution. The guard rooms with the cusped trefoil arches are commodious, and the plinth, columns and ceilings of these rooms are richly decorated with sculptures which, on account of the poor quality of the stone, are somewhat rough.

"The bastions of the inner scarp," writes Dr. Yazdani, "are circular and square

* Cam. Hist. Ind. Vol. IV, p. 193.

in design, the arrangement being that two square bastions have a round one on each side. In front of the Fath Darwaza, which faces the north, there is a very massive bastion, with a curtain on each side, thus making a barbican for the defence of the fort. Near this barbican is a guard's room with three arched openings towards the north. The arches have rather low imposts, but their form is pleasing. The barbican has a narrow court with entrances towards the west and north-east. The gates of the entrances are in the pillar-and-lintel style." The door of the outermost gate is studded with iron spikes and decorated with figures of animals and mythical deities carved in relief.

The construction of the bastions was remodelled for the use of the guns. The outer fortifications of Mudgal cover an area of half a square mile.

The Bala Hisar (citadel), built on the top of the hillock, commands a good view of the surrounding country. The water supply was assured by the construction of large cisterns and by utilizing natural depressions in the rock. On the western side of the fort we see a large cistern called the Hikrani Baoli—about 140 yards in length and fifty yards in breadth. Among the palaces and public buildings within the fort, the Ashur Khana has recently been repaired. One of the mosques, a double pillared hall, has columns of Hindu architectural design.

Warangal was the ancient capital of the kingdom of the Andhras. It has since been frequently invaded and finally overcome in 1322 when it was incorporated with the Muhammadan kingdom of the Deccan.

The city was surrounded by a double wall of fortifications, the outer wall was over seven miles, and that of the inner wall about four miles.

The fortress of Warangal was begun by Rajah Ganapati of the Kakatiya dynasty, and was completed by his successor, Rani Rudramba, his wife. As there was no male heir to the throne, she assumed the reins of government, and ably administered the kingdom for over thirty-eight years. Marco Polo visited the Court of Warangal and recorded his impressions of her reign.

"This kingdom," he writes, "was formerly under the rule of a king, and since his death, some forty years past, it has been under his queen, a lady of much discretion, who, for the great love she bore for him, never would marry another husband. And I can assure you that during all that space of forty years, she had administered her realm as well as ever her husband did, or better ; and as she was a lover of justice, of equity, and of peace, she was more beloved by those of her kingdom than ever was lady or lord of theirs before."

The first siege of the fort by the Sultan of Delhi took place in the year 1309, but thirteen years later, it came into the possession of Muhammadan power. Thus the Hindu kingdom of Telingana came to an end.

The ruins of the old town of Mahur contain a fort which deserves our attention. Mahur was an important outpost of the Bahmani kingdom, and it was necessary to build defences against hostile neighbours.

The fort of Mahur is situated on a hill. It was originally constructed by the Chalukya and the Rashtrakuta kings, but the existing structures were built mainly

by the Bahmani sultans. The architecture of the fort symbolizes the spirit of the early Muslim rulers of the Deccan. We are indebted to Dr. G. Yazdani for the following graphic description of the fort:

"The fort is very strongly built, perched on a hill 400 feet high overlooking and overawing the plains below. It has rather an irregular shape, being constructed along the edges of two close standing spurs, while the valley between them has been turned into a large tank by the construction of a massive wall. The ascent to the fort on three sides, east, west and south, is extremely precipitous ; the fourth side which is fairly accessible was defended by redoubts and stone gateways, the ruins of which can still be traced.

"Passing beyond these defences the visitor reaches the main gateway, styled the Chini Darwaza (enamel decorated gate), for its façade is decorated with panels of Persian enamel work. The gate is a massive structure—pre-Moghul in appearance and evidently built by the Bahmani kings who held possession of the fort over a century.

"Inside the gate on either side of the passage (9 feet wide) there are spacious rooms which were utilized for the accommodation of the guards. Over the roof of the gate there is an apartment where, probably, the governor of the fort lived with his zenana. The apartment opens on a beautiful courtyard with paved walks and a fine masonry is pierced with jali screens of artistic design, through which the ladies enjoyed the sight of the cavalcades passing the gateway."*

The inner defences of the fort consist of a bastion, the Dalbadal Burj, of *gigantic dimensions* and built of large blocks of masonry ; and a narrow passage, the Chore Darwaza, in a massive wall for escape in time of danger.

One particular feature of the construction of the fort is that it has not the tiers that are usually found in military architecture in the Deccan.

The fort of Bidar, with its solid masses of sandstone walls, is a picturesque edifice. In appearance it does not seem to be as strong as the rest of the Deccan fortresses ; but it has been besieged eight times without being surrendered. Bidar stands in a commanding position on a plateau some three thousand feet above sea level.

The fort was begun by Sultan Ahmad Shah in 1426 and completed in 1432. Its walls, which are some fifty feet in height and three miles in circumference, are furnished with battlements, bastions and outer defences—all very solidly constructed. There is a drop of three hundred feet on both sides of the fortress. Bastions which add to the effect of the height were designed for the mounting of guns made chiefly of bluish-coloured metal and highly polished. Some of them have the makers' name engraved upon them, together with the charge of powder to be used. There are line upon line of defences consisting of a triple moat and four crenellated walls. In the battlements there are ingenious devices for pouring boiling oil on the invader, manholes for guns and receptacles for gunpowder.

* G. Yazdani: "Mahur: Its History and Monuments." Jour. Hyd. Arch. Soc. 1918.

The fort has secret underground passages connecting its various sections and a well a hundred and fifty feet deep for water supply. There are also the ruins of of a mint, a Turkish bath and a large arsenal. A triple ditch, seventy-five feet wide and forty-five feet deep, hewn out of the solid rock, protects the fortress.

The French traveller, Thevenot, visited Bidar in 1667 and has left an account in which he says:

"It is a great citadel, encompassed with walls which have battlements, and, at certain distances, towers. They are mounted with great cannon, some of them with their mouths three feet wide. There is usually a garrison of three thousand men, half horse and half foot, with seven hundred gunners. The garrison is kept in good order. . . ."

Bidar is about two thousand eight hundred feet above sea level. From its ramparts one gets an impressive view of the plain. "The bastions of the fortress," writes Sir Richard Temple, "had a rich colouring subdued by age, being built of the red laterite of which the hills there are formed."

The ruined buildings in the fort have been constructed of trap. The front of one of these buldings had decorations of coloured tiles. Bidar contains eight gateways, each of which bears a Persian inscription. The remains of the old palaces are being conserved, and walls, chambers, fountains, baths and pavements of the Takht Mahal have been repaired. To the west of this ruin a roofless octagonal pavilion called the Muthamman Burj was in a dilapidated condition but it has now been successfully conserved.

The fortress of Parenda covers a smaller area than Bidar but its defences are "singularly efficient." In 1630 and again three years later the imperial forces were compelled to raise the siege of the fort. The defences "comprise an inner and outer wall separated by a covered passage, a moat from eighty to a hundred and ten feet in width, a second and broader covered passage outside the counter-scarp and a glacis which rises to the height of the fausse-braye. The outer or scarp wall is strengthened by twenty-two bastions and, like the inner, provided with loop-holes, a battlement and projecting galleries. The only entrance was by way of a drawbridge and gateway at the north-west corner, and thence through a narrow and devious vaulted passage to a second gateway defended by traverses and redoubts."*

As in many other Deccan forts of the period Parenda was equipped with large guns built of iron bars welded and bound together. In planning these fortifications the Bahmani sultans must have engaged men who knew something of European military engineering.

II

The fort of Bijapur is called Ark-Killah. Soon after his break with the Bahmani dynasty in 1489 A.D. Sultan Yusuf Adil Shah set himself the task of

* "The Monuments of Muslim India," Cam. Hist. Ind. Vol. III, Ch. XXIII.

constructing strong defences for his new capital at Bijapur. According to Ferishta, a mud fort stood on the site. The fortifications were designed on such a scale that the capital could not be completed by the Sultan, and a stone tablet in one of the bastions records its completion in 1546 A.D. during the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah I.

But his successor Sultan Ali Adil Shah found it necessary after his return from the battle of Talikoti (1565) to fortify the whole city instead of depending on the citadel for adequate defence of the capital and its buildings. The massive stone walls of the city are about six and a quarter miles round and thirty to fifty feet high.

Elphinstone who visited the fort at the beginning of the nineteenth century describes the walls as follows: "The ditch and rampart enclose a circle of six miles circumference. The rampart is of earth supported by strong walls and large stones. It is twenty-four feet thick at the top, and has Indian battlements in tolerable order and large towers at moderate distances. We mounted a very lofty tower separate from the wall. From this height we saw the plan of the town, now scattered with ruins and in some places full of trees. The most conspicuous object next to the great dome is the citadel. On the whole I find Bijapur much above my expectations and far beyond anything I have ever seen in the Deccan. There is something solemn in this scene and one thinks with a melancholy interest on its former possessors. The proofs of their power remain while their weaknesses and crimes are forgotten and our admiration of their grandeur is heightened by our compassion for their fall."*

The city walls are surrounded by a deep moat forty to fifty feet broad. Including ten at the gates, there are one hundred and six impressive bastions of various designs. A platform which runs all round the walls is protected on the inside by a battlemented curtain-wall about ten feet high extending from bastion to bastion. There are loopholes in the curtain-wall for both artillery and small arms. On this spacious platform there is ample room for the movement of the garrison.

Some of these bastions deserve to be mentioned. The Sherzi Burj or Lion Tower is large in diameter but not very high. In the centre are two raised circular platforms for cannon, on which lies the great bronze gun of Bijapur named the Malik-i-Maidan (Monarch of the Plain). The cannon weighs forty tons and was cast in the gun foundries of Ahmadnagar. The bastion probably takes its name from two heraldic lions carved in stone at the entrance to the tower platform.

The bastion named Landa Kasab seems to have been the most formidable in construction. Heavy pieces of artillery were mounted upon it, and it was against this bastion that Aurangzeb directed the whole fire of his artillery, and pitted it with shot marks.

The construction and architecture of the bastion (named after its designer, a Portuguese general, who was employed by Sultan Ali Adil Shah in 1576) is of great interest. The Firingi Burj (Portuguese Tower), as it is called, is a hollow

* Colebrooke: *Life of Elphinstone.*

semi-circular tower, in the centre of a strong battlemented curtain-wall. Platforms for cannon, ammunition chambers and a corridor running round the interior were constructed on a plan which differed from that of other bastions.

The gateways of the fort—there were five large ones—were made as strong and impregnable as possible. The plan was much the same in all, viz., two massive circular towers with the doorway between, and above the door a strongly-built platform guarded by a battlemented wall. "In front of these towers," wrote Mr. H. F. Silcock in the *Bombay Gazetteer*, "a broad clear space is surrounded by lofty fortified walls joined with the towers and loopholed for musketry. These walls also end in small castellated towers with another gateway between, facing parallel to the city walls, so that in addition to the fire from the gateway the approach was swept by fire from the walls. The gates themselves are of thick wooden beams about six inches square fastened together with iron clamps, strengthened with massive bars, and bristling with twelve-inch iron spikes."

The Mecca Gateway, however, is a strong fort in itself rather than an entrance to the fortification. It looks like a large bastion furnished with a number of masonry platforms for the working of heavy guns and for musketry. Guns were so placed that they could be trained on the interior of the fortification, suggesting a precautionary measure against treachery within.

This fortified city of Bijapur with its massive walls, well designed bastions and gateways, and splendid palaces, arches, tombs and minarets is one of the striking monuments in the Deccan.

Perhaps it may not be irrelevant to mention here a Muslim queen, the wife of Sultan Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur, and the sister of the Sultan of Ahmednagar. As Colonel Taylor puts it, "few in England know that the contemporary of our Queen Elizabeth in the Deccan kingdoms was a woman of equal ability, of equal political talent, of equal, though in a different sense, education and accomplishments, who ruled over a realm as large, a population as large, and as intelligent, and as rich as England ; a woman, who, surrounded by jealous enemies, preserved by her own personal valour and endurance her kingdom from destruction and partition ; who, through all temptations and exercise of absolute power, was at once simple, generous, frank and merciful as she was chaste, virtuous, religious and charitable. One who, among all women of India, stands out as a jewel without flaw and beyond price."*

Sultan Ali Adil Shah had no sons and was succeeded by his nephew Ibrahim who was not old enough to conduct public affairs at the time of his uncle's death. Queen Chand Bibi assumed the responsibilities of the regency. Her guardianship left a deep impression upon Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah and made no small contribution to his success as a ruler of the kingdom of Bijapur.

Queen Chand Bibi, who was by birth a Princess of Ahmednagar, took a leading part in the defence of the city against the attacks of the Mughal army led by Prince

* Colonel Meadows Taylor: *A Noble Queen.*

Murad, son of Emperor Akbar, in 1596. A part of the city wall was blown by a mine and "when the breach was made, several of the leading officers of the garrison prepared for flight. But Chand Bibi, clad in armour, and with a veil thrown over her face, and a drawn sword in her hand, dashed forward to defend the breach. The fugitives to a man returned and joined her, and as the storming party held back for the other mines, the besieged had time to throw rockets, powder and other combustibles into the ditch, and to bring guns to bear upon the breach."

Prince Murad was eventually compelled to raise the siege, and sent ambassadors to the Queen to negotiate. The Mughals complimented her on her heroic defence and left the city of Ahmednagar.

Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah dedicated a poem to Queen Chand Bibi which may interest the reader.

In the garden of the blest, where the happy houris dwell,
In the palaces of men, where earth's fairest ones are seen,
There is none who can compare in beauty and in grace
With the noble Chand Sultana, Bijapur's beloved Queen.

Though in battle's dreadful turmoil her courage never failed,
In the sober arts of peace she was gentle and serene,
To the feeble tender-hearted, to the needy ever kind,
Was the noble Chand Sultana, Bijapur's beloved Queen.

As the champak flower in fragrance is the sweetest flower that blows.
As the cypress trees in form all other trees excel,
So in disposition tender, in beauty without peer,
Was the gracious Queen whose praise no human tongue can tell.

In memory of that mother who with watchful tender care,
Ever guarded her poor orphan in a weary troubled land,
I, Ibrahim the Second, these feeble lines indite.
To the honour of that Princess, the Noble Lady Chand.*

III

The fort of Golconda has been the scene of many historical events. After declaring his independence from the Bahmani House in 1510, Kuli Kutb-ul-Mulk realized the necessity of strengthening the fortifications of his capital. Indeed, he made it an impregnable stronghold which, 170 years later, baffled the whole of Emperor Aurangzeb's army for eight months.

The fort is situated in a strangely wild country, arid and bare. The geological formation of the country, characterized by gigantic boulders of fantastic sizes and shapes, is suitable for the location of the fort. It was on this site that a small fort (Mankal) was built by one of the ancient Dravidian rulers of Warangal. In 1364 he ceded it to the Bahmani Sultan Muhammed Shah.

* Translated by H. F. Silcock.

The name Golconda is derived from the word Golcar meaning a shepherd. According to legend, it was through a shepherd that the place was discovered as being suitable for the building of a fort.

The structure of the fort is an irregular rhombus with a rough pentagon (known as the Naya Quila, new fort) added to its north-eastern face. The fort is surrounded by a strong crenellated wall of granite, some four miles in circumference. The walls are of great thickness. There are eighty-seven semi-circular bastions, each from fifty to sixty feet high and built of massive blocks of granite cemented together. A deep moat runs outside the fort. Of the eight huge gateways and draw-bridges, four are still in use. The gate doors are studded with sharp pointed iron spikes to prevent elephants from battering them down.

Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the distinguished Indian historian, writes: "The eight massive gates could have safely defied any artillery known to the seventeenth century. On the walls were mounted a vast display of cannon, some of them being very fine specimens of mediæval gunfounders' art.

"But Golconda really consists of four distinct forts joined to each other and included within the same lines of circumvallation. The lowest of these is the outermost enclosure into which we enter by the Fath Darwaza (one of the gates) near the south-eastern corner. It is a vast tract covered with mansions of nobles, bazaars, temples, mosques, soldiers' barracks, powder magazines, stables and even cultivated fields. Here the whole population of Hyderabad used to live in times of danger."*

Through another gate named the Bala Hisar, we proceed towards the apex of the fortress. It stands on a foundation of solid granite. The walls of this "citadel of the citadel" are built with huge boulders, connecting the parapets that tower far overhead.

It is to be noted that here in the heart of this fortress the early Dravidian rulers built their first stronghold, filling the gaps in the natural massive rocky walls with mud and rough stones. Here also are their ancient temples cut into the rock.

We have already mentioned imposing edifices built within the fort during the prosperous rule of the Kutb Shahi dynasty. It was on the glacis of Golconda that the grandfather of the first Nizam, foremost in charge and last in retreat, received a serious wound and died a true soldier's death.

The court history of Aurangzeb describes the incident as follows: "On 28th January, 1687, the Imperial Army arrived two miles from the fort of Golconda. The Emperor ordered the enemy's force which had assembled at the foot of the fort to be driven away. The Imperialists exerted themselves greatly. The enemy fled, leaving their property, children and wives in the hands of the Mughals. Qalich Khan (the grandfather of the first Nizam) galloped up to the fort and wanted to

* Sir Jadunath Sarkar: "The Last Siege and Capture of Golconda, 1687." Jour. Hyd Arch. Soc. 1918.

enter it immediately. . . . A *zamburak* ball hit him on the shoulder blade. Save Lutfullah Khan, who had heroically accompanied him, none advanced to his aid. So Qalich Khan had to ride back from that place of slaughter. When the surgeons were extracting the splinters of bone from his shoulder, he sat composedly talking with the persons around, without twitching a muscle of his face ; sipping coffee from a cup held in the other hand, and remarking: 'What an admirable tailor I have got!' (in reference to the surgeon who was stitching up the wound). In three days he died."* It was the father of the first Nizam who led the final siege of Golconda.

Besides the fortresses I have mentioned, there are several minor examples† of military architecture in the Deccan. While the system of fortifications of many of these Deccan forts has undoubtedly followed western principles of military engineering, the architectural style, with a few notable exceptions, belongs essentially to the Deccan. "It is a style," writes Sir John Marshall, "which combines sincerity of purpose with an innate sense for the decorative. The Indian builders of these forts grasped what was required and designed their structures accordingly, not slavishly following established precedent nor matching one feature meticulously against another as the later Mughal builders did, but setting each where it was needed, making it of such size and strength as was required, and giving to the whole that touch of beauty that comes naturally and instinctively to the artists of Southern India. It is this quality of simple purposefulness in their architecture that gave to these fortresses of the Deccan much of their romantic charm—a charm which was denied to many a building in which beauty was more consciously aimed at."‡

* *Masir-i-Alamgiri.* Translated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar.

† e.g. Taltam, Naldrug, Qandhar, Bhongir, Udgir, etc.

‡ "The Monuments of Muslim Indias," Cam. Hist. Ind. Vol. III, Ch. XXIII.

CHAPTER SIX

RECENT ARCHITECTURE IN THE STATE

In no other city in India has taken place such a great transformation in the development of modern architecture as in Hyderabad, the capital of the State. But this development shows that the Indo-Muslim architectural art has a life of its own and that it has not undergone sufficient positive modifications which mark a sharp limit between its tradition and its recent growth. The changes are not fundamental and have not affected the delicacy and elegance of what is known as Indo-Muslim architecture.

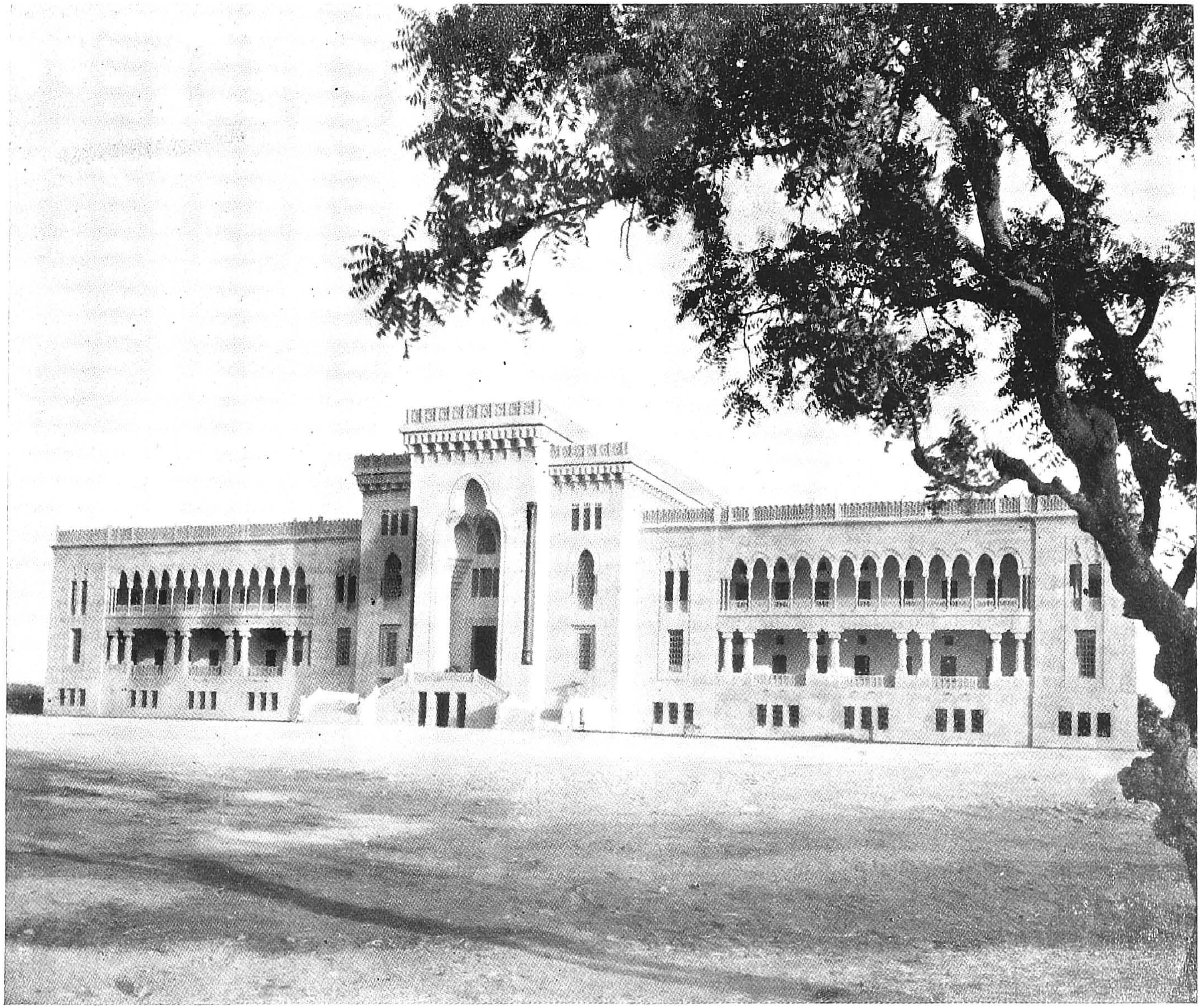
Mr. Vincent J. Esch, who has had wide experience both of British India and the Indian States says: "*In India are to be found some of the best craftsmen in the* world, their skill in building and its many allied arts having been handed down from generation to generation, literally from father to son. I am able, and proud, to pay a high tribute of appreciation to these artificers from personal knowledge of their industry and ability. I used to make a habit of going round by moonlight ; it is very fascinating when large work is being done. Sometimes, in the company of a friend, I have seen a small light. The scaffolding is bamboo and dangerous, but on going up I have probably found a man with a little boy and a friend, doing a bit of work to show me the following day and he was not getting overtime!"*

He bears further testimony to the spirit of fellowship among the artisans irrespective of caste and creed, and writes:

"In all my varied experience in different parts of India I have found this natural bond so apparent with the Hindu craftsmen and the Muhammadan *mistri*, working side by side in perfect understanding."

Both in spirit and craftsmanship the general style of the Osmania University is that of Indo-Muslim architecture. Replying to an address presented to him by the Council of the Osmania University on the occasion of the Jubilee of his reign, the Nizam said that he had ordained that Hindu and Muslim motifs should blend in the decoration of the building. To quote his own words, "The architecture of this building represents a blending of the Hindu and Muslim styles, and the art and culture of both these races are reflected in the pillars and traceries and carvings on the door and walls. Thus, the building symbolizes the close contacts and the friendly relations subsisting for centuries between the various classes of my subjects, as a result of which the people of my State have always in the past lived in harmony with each other. . . . The Osmania University *should not only be the repository* of Hyderabad's best traditions, a model of its high culture ; it should also aim at

* *India Arts and Letters*, 1942.



Arts College, Osmania University, Hyderabad

broad-mindedness and mutual toleration and unity among the students, for in that ideal lies the well-being and prosperity of this State."

The University buildings, which include women's dormitories, a stadium, a museum and a gymnasium, occupy some twenty-five acres of ground. The Osmania University represents not only an urge towards the revival of learning, but is also a monument to the revival of Indian art.

The High Court of Justice is erected on the reclaimed land on the southern bank of the Musi in a picturesque setting. Its design is bold in conception. The convex-shaped domes are tastefully finished in lapis lazuli blue glazed ware with gilded finials. This attractive edifice is built in solid granite of "a soft shade of pink" but decorative schemes are carried out in red sandstones and this applies to panels of bas-relief decoration, archways, balustrades and window *chajja* shades.

The interior decoration is done in plaster of various colours and its designs are characteristically drawn from the Muslim art tradition. The building is a hundred and fifty-four feet in depth and about three hundred and sixty-two feet in length. The granite arch which is the central feature of the north elevation is fifty-eight feet high. In its design there is a harmony between the edifice and its surrounding ; and in executing it the Indian masons and craftsmen have not only shown great skill but also their capacity to render such modifications as are warranted by modern developments without disturbing the organic unity of the traditional Indo-Muslim architecture.

That the Indo-Muslim style of architecture can be simple and yet very attractive is exemplified by the State Library. The Archaeological Museum is another charming example of sober architecture. With its wide *chajja* cornice and arched entrance, and the typical *chajja* balconies, the building acquires an attractive character.

Recent buildings in Hyderabad represent a forward movement in the sphere of architecture and subsidiary arts. Hyderabad is thus not only a veritable museum of mediaeval architecture, sculpture and fresco painting, but a State where modern buildings bear living testimony to a genuine artistic renaissance.

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES LIBRARY
ACC. No.
EGMORE, MADRAS-600 008

GLOSSARY

Arhat:	Monk.
Asokan Edicts:	These Edicts were engraved on stones and pillars by Emperor Asoka in which he prescribed rules of morality.
Apsaras:	Mythical heavenly creatures.
Avatars:	Incarnations.
Anda:	Literally, egg ; spherical portion of the stupa.
Asana:	Seat.
Buddha:	(Pali, *Bodhi*, knowledge) one who has attained enlightenment.
Baradari:	A square or rectangular pavilion with arched openings in each of its sides.
Bodhisattva:	*Bodhi*, wisdom ; *Sattva*, in embryo. Devotee in whom true knowledge is undeveloped.
Burj:	Tower.
Bund:	Dam or embankment.
Chaitya:	Chapel, a place of meditation.
Chakra:	A wheel. It is an ancient Vedic symbol of the sun. The Buddhists adopted it as the symbol of the *law*.
Chajja:	Drip stones.
Cos:	One cos equals two miles.
Chauri:	Fly-whisk. · Symbol of royalty.
Dagoba:	(Singhalese) an altar made in the form of a model of a stupa. Derived from *Dhatu-garbha*.
Dharma:	Duty, law.
Dharmasala:	Hindu caravanserai.
Dhwajastambha:	Lofty pillar in front of the temple.
Dhyana ·	Meditation.
Dwarapalas:	Door-keepers.
Dikka:	Tribune.
Gandharvas:	Attendants of the gods ; celestial bards.
Garbha:	Womb.
Hinayana:	The lesser vehicle. The early puritanical form of Buddhism. Its adherents were concerned chiefly with ceremonial observances.
Harmika:	The finial of a stupa in the form of a pedestal in which the shaft of the umbrella was set.
Jataka:	Stories of the Buddha's former lives.
Jina:	Title, meaning "victorious," of Mahavira, religious reformer of the Jains.

Jali:	Litterally, net ; any lattice or perforated pattern.
Jama Masjid:	A great congregational mosque.
Kailasa:	The Olympus of Indian mythology.
Kirtistambha:	Literally, pillar of fame ; free standing pillar in front of temple.
Mahal:	Palace.
Mandapa:	Pavilion or porch.
Mosque:	Arabic *masjid,* meaning a place for prostration.
Mihrab:	Niche.
Mimbar:	Pulpit.
Mahayana:	The greater vehicle ; it represented a new school of Buddhism founded by Nagarjuna about 450 years after the passing of the Buddha.
Mudra:	Mystic features of the hands.
Pradakshina:	The circumambulation of a stupa; part of the ceremony in Buddhist ritual.
Padmapani:	*Padma,* lotus ; *Pani,* hand ; one of the Bodhisattvas in attendance on the Buddha.
Padma:	Lotus ; in Buddhist symbolism it represents the qualities of purity and divine birth.
Padmasambhava:	The Lotus-born.
Rauza:	Garden.
Stambhas:	Pillars.
Stupa:	A form of tumulus erected over the sacred relics of the Buddha or on spots consecrated by him.
Shikhara:	Spire or tower.
Shesha:	A serpent-deity.
Simhasana:	Lion-throne.
Sangha:	Budhist order of monks.
Stambha:	Pillar.
Torana:	An arched doorway.
Tirthankara:	Jain elders.
Vihara:	Monastery.
Viswakarma:	Lord of the Arts, patron saint of craftsmen.

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES LIBRARY
ACC. No. 6472
EGMORE, MADRAS

OUR
OTHER PUBLICATIONS

THE HANDBOOK OF INDIA . . . INDIA—TOURIST INFORMATION . . . TRAVANCORE-COCHIN GUIDE BOOK . . . INDIA—A PICTORIAL SURVEY . . . INDIA IN MAPS . . . ABOUT INDIA . . . INDIAN ART THROUGH THE AGES. . . OUR ROADS . . . OUR FLAG . . . OUR GOVERNMENT. . . OUR CONSTITUTION . . . REPUBLIC DAY—A PICTORIAL SURVEY . . . HOMAGE . . . . . . AFTER PARTITION . . . MILLIONS ON THE MOVE . . . REHABILITATING THE UPROOTED . . . MUSCLE CAN DO IT—THE STORY OF NILOKHERI . . . LEARNING TO EARN . . . CONCERNING EVACUEE PROPERTY . . . LABOUR IN INDIA . . . AGRICULTURE IN INDIA . . . SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOOD . . . GANGA KHADIR . . . RECLAMATION OF KANS LAND . . . INDIAN STATES TODAY . . . THREE PILLARS OF STATE . . . INDIAN ARMY AND HOW TO JOIN IT . . . INDIAN NAVY AND HOW TO JOIN IT . . . DEFENDING KASHMIR . . . KASHMIR CALLING . . . THE KASHMIR STORY . . . BURMAH —OUR NEIGHBOUR . . . THE CONFERENCE ON INDONESIA . . . THE CHENNA KESAVA TEMPLE AT BELUR . . . 5000 YEARS OF INDIAN ARCHITECTURE . . . THE FIRST YEAR . . . THE SECOND YEAR . . . THE THIRD YEAR . . . RAJAJI'
SPEECHES . . . SARDAR PATEL ON INDIAN PROBLEMS . . . INDEPENDENCE AND AFTER

The Publications Division
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India

PRICE Rs. 1/8